The Origin of Subjectivity in Hindu Thought

By
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FOREWORD

This book is the outcome of a long interest in Hindu life and thought. My gratitude is due Professor Simon Frazer MacLennan, professor of philosophy in Oberlin College, for suggesting investigation in this field with a view to a social interpretation. I wish also to express my sincerest appreciation to Professor George Herbert Mead and Dr. Walter Eugene Clark, of the University of Chicago, for assistance and advice in making the investigation and for direction in the construction of the paper.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most fascinating and yet most neglected fields of human experience is that known as Indian or Hindu thought. Hemmed in by the Himālaya Mountains and the Indian Sea, it existed in comparative isolation from both oriental and occidental thought until the invasion of the English in the eighteenth century. Even the hardiest and most persistent investigator has been baffled by this prolific product of more than thirty centuries, extending from the migrations of an Aryan branch into the Indus Valley some ten or fifteen centuries before the Christian era to the conquest of Lord Clive. However, a century of arduous research by Max Müller, Oldenberg, Geldner, Rhys Davids, and other adventurous spirits has blazed pathways into this fascinating jungle. The disagreement of these pioneers makes it, nevertheless, sometimes rather unsafe ground for the novice, who must always proceed with caution and trembling.

But the pursuit proves too interesting. Hindu thought is essentially social and also universally religious. The social is religious and the religious social. Indian thought passes through a variety of forms, but this characteristic is always outstanding. It has almost nothing that could be classed as strictly secular. No Burbank of human experience could produce a species more delightful to the modern religious theorist. It differs from Hebrew life in a comparative absence of the moral element; from the Greek in its lesser definition of its god-forms, in its polytheism, and in its want of interest in science; from the Roman in its lack of initiative and of ability for organization; and from all Western thought in its emphasis upon the subjective phase and its neglect of the individual as such.

The means of investigation in this field is itself restricted. Because of India's isolation foreign commentary prior to the tenth century A.D. is of small amount; Megasthenes, the Macedonian ambassador to the court of Chandragupta in the fourth century B.C., has left us some records of Hindu life of that period.

Also Chinese travelers to India have given a description of Buddhist India. The internal presentation of its thought is limited by its lack of treatises on history and science. The materials to be used are the religious hymns, the sacrificial formulae, the lawbooks, the epics, the dramas, the fables, the lyrics, and the philosophical treatises. For the sake of simplicity and clearness it may be advisable to indicate the arrangement of the earliest portion of the Sanskrit literature—the Vedas. The core of these is the Rig-Veda, a collection of ten books of sacrificial hymns; it is followed by the Sāma-Veda, the metrical version of these hymns; by the Yajur-Veda, sacrificial formulae; and by the Atharva-Veda, magic charms and spells. Each Veda has special divisions, and these cover a considerable period of time, showing definite change and development. These divisions may be indicated as follows:

Veda—

- *a*) Mantra: Mere hymn-poetry.
- *b*) Brāhmaṇa: The text in prose—an interpretation or explanation of the Mantra.
  1. Āraṇyaka: Forest Books.
  2. Upanishads: Philosophical books.
- *c*) Sūtra ("thread"): A syllabus of the long Brāhmaṇa.
  1. Çrauta: Public type of sacrifice—king's sacrifice
  2. Gṛihya: Minor sacrifice—marriage, death, etc.
  3. Dharma: Concerning relations towards fellow-men and gods—duties.

The highest interest in all the literature is that which centers around the essential characteristics of later vedic thought—its subjectivity. This subjectivity, with its attendant pessimism and doctrine of illusion, form a development different from that of any other country. Hence our problem becomes an investigation of the sources and conditions which could produce such a peculiar type of experience.

Subjectivity is a type of self-consciousness due to a persistent thwarting of individual experience. Consciousness does not appear in the experience process until an obstacle arises, that is, until there is a lapse in the process; instinct and habit are illustrations of such a continuous experience process. But when the experience process is blocked, this suspension permits its separation

into parts, and it becomes what we call the knowledge process. Such an opposition of parts is necessary to the rise of self-consciousness; every individual consciousness must become aware of something set over against itself before it can be aware of itself. These parts of the opposition we call the subject and the object. However, this self-consciousness can be expressed in two ways: If this opposition is mediated, the synthesis that results is a relationship of unity in difference, the unity of the act. In the unity of the act the object of knowledge or the object of desire is created as such from the reactions of the subject; this furnishes a mechanism for the control of the object, and a voluntary, natural accommodation on the part of the subject. It is not merely the definiteness of an object that permits us to act, but the ability to act defines the object, makes it more concrete. The individual in this mediation does not lose his identity or his form of expression; he expresses himself through his construction of the physical object, which in turn is built up by the reactions of the self. The knowledge process, then, is a continuous interaction of subject and object when we have an objective type of thought. When the impulse to movement, of which this object of knowledge or desire is the initial phase, attains fulfilment, it becomes universalized, that is, a part of the world outside of the individual. In a concrete situation the process would be expressed as the object of knowledge or desire becoming socialized; thus the individual becomes a real, active, concrete element within his social group, and his experience is taken over by the group-consciousness. The individual consciousness now possesses a social value through the individual's ability to initiate and organize group experience.

On the other hand, if this opposition in the experience process cannot be mediated, cannot become an action, the subject turns back within itself. The result is a subjective self-consciousness. In its social aspect this means the thwarting of the universalizing or socializing process, and experience must turn within the individual and there reform the object of knowledge or desire. The result is either the rise of a system of control within the individual in terms of other ideas and desires or the suppression altogether of this idea or emotion which cannot be universalized. The meaning

of this suspended impulse is that eventually it kills itself or is annihilated; on the social side the individual fails to find an evaluation of himself in the group-consciousness.

This is what happened in India. A fixed caste system furnished the unyielding opposition against which the self was forced. In the northern and eastern parts of India, where migration and conquests were still active, the warrior controlled conditions. In the older and more permanent civilization of Western India the warrior had lost his function, and the Brahman became the chief figure. Here the priests dominated everything. Thus all orthodox doctrines arose in the western center of Brahmanism, and the reconstructive tendencies are attributed to the warriors in the eastern section. The Brahman, not being opposed in the expressing of his function, did not feel problems that must confront the Kshatriyans. His loyalty to caste, his indifference to, and even unconsciousness of, the others' problem, served as an effective check on the ideal and desire that the king chose to realize. The king was a figurehead, not a real ruler. It was the history of this opposition which set the theme for all later literature and which was the history of a suspended ideal that was never universalized in Indian Society. The result was the doctrine of illusion in the Vedānta system and the pessimism and negation of Buddhism. The trend of subjectivity was in a continuous line, fatal and predetermined as long as the Brahmans were at the head of the caste and not aroused to self-consciousness.

In chapter i is traced the early tendency toward an objective development of nature and the person; the following chapter shows its transition to a philosophical interest and the rise of a subjective interest through emphasis upon the class-consciousness of the Brahman and the function of this group. This class-consciousness was developed through the sacrifice, which was the chief expression of the priest's function, and also through the form of education and initiation for this duty, Brahmacārya. Thus the priests were set aside as peculiarly fitted for this service and as particularly sanctified by it. All of this emphasized and helped crystallize the class system which was rapidly arising from distinctions in occupation and color (conquered Dravidian).

In chapter iv the social system and the religious formulation have arrived at a condition of arrested development. The first attempt to express the individual desire for new function and meaning comes in the Kshatriyan doctrine of the self as the knowing subject. The texts hint at a self which is to find all its impulses and activities real. The sense-world is true and valuable. But the Brahmans have taken all the flavor out of these passages by identifying this self with an All-God which cannot be known.

The Vedānta is the conclusion of this theory. It asserts that the true self is the unknown and unknowable inner being. This self through ignorance becomes united with the senses, but the world which this union depicts is unreal, therefore an illusion.

Buddhism and the heretical movements are discussed in chapter v. The Buddhists accept no god and eventually destroy the conscious self. Their system of control of self assists in bringing harmony into this life, but is of no value for the future existence in Nirvāṇa. The materialists conclude the negative movement by destroying everything except existence in this life.

Chapter vi records briefly the positive developments as found in the epic and the renaissance of the Christian era, which held vital possibilities that were never realized.

CHAPTER I

VEDISM

When the curtain rises on Indian life, the Aryans are in migration, having come through the mountain passes of the western spurs of the Himālayas, into the Punjab. The early hymns of the Rig-Veda depict them in constant warfare with the native Dravidians—a dark-skinned, primitive people. They lived in tribes or classes under the leadership of chieftains or rajahs and possessed definite nomadic tendencies. Probably a small amount of grain was raised, or else the wild grain was collected for food; but their produce was butter (*ghee*) and milk, and their universal occupation cattle-raising. A few horses were known; these seem to have belonged to the rajahs and warriors and were used with chariots or for occasional sacrifice. Homes are mentioned—possibly their own more or less temporary dwelling-places or those of the natives. Jewels, gold, metal-work, weapons of metal, and cooking utensils were known. Some wild animals are spoken of—a fact which helps to determine Aryan occupation of the Punjab at this time—and there is also direct reference to the river Indus and its five tributaries. Holderness, speaking of modern India, says:

> The Indo-Aryan type is met with chiefly in the Punjab, Rajputana, and Kashmir. It approaches closely to that ascribed to the traditional Aryan colonists of India.[1] . . . . The Rajput clans are the purest specimens of the Aryan race in India. The Rajputs are there as rulers and overlords. . . . . The cultivating classes and trading classes are of Dravidian and mixed Dravidian type. And still lower down in the social scale, in the recesses of the hills and jungles, the pure Dravidian is found in the person of the Bheel.[2]

The date of the invasion is quite impossible to establish; dates ranging from 4000 to 1500 B.C. have been suggested. The date of the collection of the hymns was undoubtedly somewhat later, the most acceptable date being between 1500 and 1000 B.C. The

[1] Holderness, *Peoples and Problems of India*, p. 69.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 74.

hymns were written by special priests or families of priests and were to be used at the sacrifice; they were finally collected by a developing priesthood as a permanent and efficient means of approaching the gods. There are 1,028 hymns in the Rig-Veda. A study of their meter and arrangement shows a long development. Books II–VIII are accepted as the first collection, and Books IX, I, and X as later additions. Therefore our first statement of their religious conceptions will be from the point of view of the earlier collection, Books II–VIII. The Rig-Veda has always been held as the source of religious authority; it was given as a revelation to the seers and is supposed to have existed from eternity.

The pantheon of Vedism contains an infinite number of gods, but thirty-three may be taken as an approximation. The reason for this indefiniteness lies in the nature of the gods. Bloomfield classifies them as (1) prehistoric, (2) transparent, (3) translucent, (4) opaque, (5) abstract. Aside from the first type these indicate degrees of personification. But the gods are ill-defined and wanting in distinction from each other. If it were not for the name in the hymn, it would be difficult to determine which god the Hindu worshiper intended to praise. Their qualities overlap and seem almost to merge into one being. These vague delineations suggest how poor were Hindu conceptions of an individual and indicate the intensity of the early group-consciousness which could so indure in the shifting conditions involved in the migration. The gods did not live in a family organization like the Greek gods, and the hymns are *to* the gods rather than *about* them. Undoubtedly consciousness centered in the clan, and not essentially in the family or the individual, though, as we have seen, the first step toward a consciousness has been taken. This meager mythology of the Rig-Veda may have come from a remote period. A comparison of the gods and the myths of the Mazdan religion with the Rig-Veda suggests what a long road these ideas must have traveled. A few words will show some of the associations that can be made: Andra-demon, Indra; Mithra, Mitra; haoma, soma; baresman, barhis; and zaotar, hotar. The first two associations are gods; the two following, details of the sacrifice; and the last is a special priest. The function and importance of these gods vary in the

two countries, indicating undoubtedly a considerable change in the Iranian or the Hindu people and possibly in both. Many of the Hindu deities are Persian demons, a fact which may indicate an ethical advance among the Persians beyond the originally common belief. Usually the Hindu gods represented phases of nature that were significant to them, such as the rain, the sun, the wind, fire, water, heaven and earth, the dawn, and the storm. But it must be remembered at every point in this description that Vedism is an aristocratic religion, and it is in a later period that the first evidence of a popular religion appears.

The god in ascendance in this early period was Indra; more than two hundred and fifty hymns were dedicated to him. He is boastful—a hearty warrior, representing great physical power, and a lusty eater and drinker. Here is a picture of all the combativeness, the animal spirits, the crudity, the braggadocio yet simplicity and directness of the Indo-Aryan chieftain; just a little fancy transplants him to Southern Europe and the fifth century and he becomes a marauding Goth. If any class supremacy exists in this period, it must surely belong to the burly warrior. Indra is a kind of Hercules—he conquers demons; he is, moreover, Lord of Heaven, maker of all things and identified with the sun. Muir points out that "a variety of vague and general epithets are lavished upon Indra."[1]

> Without whom naught exists, Indra the Lofty One;
> In whom all heroic powers are combined;
> The Soma is within him, in his frame is vast strength,
> The thunder in his hand and wisdom in his head.[2]

He has been given more physical description than any other Hindu god; he has more definite personification. Like Zeus, he is the thundergod, the protector from earthy and aërial danger. Indra then can be said to be the projection of the Rig-Veda conception of the Indian social group.

From the point of the number of hymns the next god in importance was Agni. Some two hundred hymns were his portion.

[1] Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts,* V, 83.

[2] Rig-Veda. II. 16. 2 (Griffith translation).

Agni has three forms: the heavenly fire, the atmospheric fire, and the terrestrial fire. He is a rival of Indra in questions of power and influence.

Praise of the Ashura, high Imperial Ruler, the Manly One in whom the folk shall triumph,
I laud his deeds who is as strong as Indra,
And lauding, celebrate the Fort-Destroyer, Sage, Sign, Food, Light,
They bring him from the mountain, the Blessed Sovran of the earth and heaven.[1]

Agni and Soma are two direct physical facts which are given worship. They are features of the sacrifice and undoubtedly testify to the importance of the sacrifice to the early Aryan. The Soma, it should be stated, was a libation poured over the sacrifice and kept for the priests who partook of the feasts with the gods. It was the juice pressed from the soma-plant and allowed to ferment. Agni seems to typify the priest spirit, but it is unsafe to base a theory of class rivalry on the "friendly" contentions of the gods Indra and Agni.

Varuna was the god of next importance in popularity; twelve hymns were dedicated to him. Considerable controversy ranges about the significance and development of this deity. Varuna is characterized by quietness, repose, and dignity—features wanting in the other gods. The name is associated with the Sanskrit word *rta*, which means "to go," from which is derived the idea of a regular going. Varuna is, then, the god of the cosmic order—this is cosmic law and becomes the god of the moral order also. Oldenberg gives Varuna a Semitic origin, because he is the only god with moral characteristics.[2]

"Loose me from sin as from a bond that binds me;
May we swell, Varuna, thy spring of Order."[3]

"Far from me remove all danger;
Accept me graciously thou Holy Sovran."[4]

Later Varuna becomes the sky-god. Many later passages make this reference, and Varuna becomes linked with Mitra, the sun-god. Professor Roth contends that Varuna belongs to an older

[1] Rig-Veda. VII. 6. 1, 2.
[2] Cf. Oldenberg, *Religion des Vedas.*
[3] R.-V. II. 28. 5.
[4] R.-V. II. 28. 6.

class of gods, a more spiritual and supersensuous religion (possibly of the Indo-Iranian period), which was gradually superseded by the nature-gods, with Indra developing as they advanced into the Punjab. Furthermore, Indra was scarcely known in an earlier period, and then it was with quite a different nature. This is also made to account for the assumption of a nature-form by Varuna later.[1]

On the other hand, Professor Muir insists that, while the hymns have some passages suggestive of rivalry and change, there is not sufficient evidence to warrant such a contention.[2] But this much is of interest to us: Varuna stood alone in the capacity of ruler of a moral order and punisher of sin. He is the Hindus' nearest approach to a monotheistic and ethical conception of God. We must assume either that many hymns have been lost or that the god is of minor importance. This latter would imply small sense of sin or responsibility. Later conditions justify this assumption—the thing that was "right" was an objective affair, a successful act, and not the spiritual attitude. The Greek boy who was honored if he could steal successfully was kin to the Hindus.

The remainder of the pantheon was constituted of more or less limited personifications of natural forces. The Ādityas were sky-gods; Vāyu and Vāta, two forms of the wind; Parjana, the thundering rain-god; Ushas, the dawn; Pushan, a solar deity, protector and multiplier of cattle; the two great sun-gods are Sūrya, the shining one, and Sāvitar, the awakener. Vishṇu, the mighty one, and Çiva, the destroyer, were gods just known in this period, but destined for later popularity. It is interesting to note that every class had its representative in the pantheon—Indra for the Kshatriyans, Agni for the Brahmans, and Pushan for the Vaiçyas. The minor position of Pushan is to be expected, for this third class is granted small mention in the hymns and could not have been in any sense a class with initiative and power.

The Rig-Veda hymns had in them very little of direct, warm, and vital experience; they were ritualistic, practical, and wholly utilitarian. The popular poetical inspirations of an earlier tra-

[1] *Journal of the German Oriental Society*, VI, 76.

[2] Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, V, 121.

dition had lost vitality and emotion and had degenerated into a conscious tool, merely a medium of approach to the gods. The gods were to be appeased rather than revered. To give them food, drink, and flattery was better than to be good. In fact, this was the only good that the Hindus knew; no recognition was granted to the spirit and intention of the act. The consequence alone was the conscious problem. Consequently there was no element of propitiation for sin, only an offering of material goods to gain the favor of the deities, who would grant further wealth, success, and happiness. It was a system of barter, with the priest as middleman. The Vedic order of proxy worship called for no response from the sacrificer, except in terms of cattle for the priest, and naturally became largely mechanical. No warmth of feeling like that in the Hebrew psalms was found in the Rig-Veda. The worship that is mechanical for the worshiper escapes criticism; as long as it can carry on the illusion of effectiveness through its elaboration and complexity the worshiper is satisfied. The more complicated the service appears to an unquestioning onlooker, the more mystical and often the more real is its effect. While the Rig-Veda is thoroughly objective in its earlier portion, there is much that is mystical and unintelligible, portentous of undefined problems, and half-conscious of the ineffectiveness of the Vedic religious system. But this unrest was destined to a fulfilment that culminated in a system that warped or smothered all self-expression or budding hope.

At this time the three chief classes of society—Brahmans, Kshatriyans, and Vaiçyas—lived in comparative freedom with each other. What may have been their primitive condition and how far they had progressed history gives no clue. However, from analogy to other primitive culture, a study of the conditions of life in the Rig-Veda permits us to project something of their past and to attempt an explanation of their present and future. They belonged to definite tribes; the stories of the *Mahābhārata* seem to indicate that tribal organization was pretty strong. The expression of the community spirit in a stationary tribe is by means of its occupations, such as hunting and fishing and crude handwork—and in times of defense. Ideals are caught up from

all phases of life and focused in the emotional and dramatic activities of the religious ceremonial. These ideals are not conscious possessions of the tribe; the closest approach to thought-discriminations and definitions are in the social concepts, the so-called "collective representations," and these, too, are outside of the individual's conscious development. The American Indian, the Australian native, and many African tribes exhibit these characteristics. Attempts to deal with nature, human or non-human (for primitive peoples make no distinction), are by means of magic. This likewise is an unconscious process—unconscious at least from the standpoint of being a solution. This method has effectiveness only so far as it is applied under the hypnotic influence of complete group participation.[1]

Differentiation comes into this tribal unity through contact with other tribes in times of defense, possibly arising out of scanty food supply in the territory of the aggressor. Also one member of the tribe becomes distinguished as leader in war or in the magic ceremonies, and this means that he has more of the vital principle, the "mana" of the tribe. He becomes then sanctified, or a being in some measure set apart. The captive taken in war, when not killed, is given the most undesirable service of the tribe. In these two types are found the beginnings, the top and bottom rounds of a social ladder.

The Indo-Aryans when they first appear in Sanskrit literature have only such remnants of this stationary life as magic, ceremonial, and taboo. They are no longer stationary but nomadic. A comparison of Indian and Iranian mythology indicates that a considerable advance from early group types had been made before the separation of these two branches of Aryan people. Possibly both were nomadic people. Out of this nomadic existence and constant warfare new forms of social classification have sprung. A shifting social situation is always coincident with flexibility of thought and presents opportunities of reconstruction and progress. This condition lends itself to an appreciation of individuality. The meager tendency toward personification of the gods and their attendant caprice reflects this social opportunity. But it was

[1] Cf. Lévy-Bruhl, *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures.*

destined to measure its own defeat. The warrior found his function more and more limited by the press of such circumstances as the guerilla warfare and the advance into the Punjab Valley. The tribe does not have opportunity to carry on its religious ceremonials and feasts as a community; it begins to lose its collective spiritual experience. A system of proxy worship for the chieftains and warriors is set up; the medicine-men and magicians of the tribe increase, because each leader needs his priest to protect him and absolve him from the taboo of the enemy through these proxy ceremonies. The long ceremonies (the horse sacrifice) must have been carried on in the absence of the warrior. It might be noted here that the horse sacrifice was the privilege of the warrior and the rajah only. Some insist that this had as its cause economic conditions—none but a king or a chieftain could afford a horse; but may it not have a significant bearing upon the usefulness and necessity of the horse for the warrior? This proxy worship tended to develop the dependence of the warrior class upon the priests, for it was the ceremonial that brought success and happiness. In so far as the priest was successful he gained in power over the warrior, and his consciousness of himself as an effective and important instrument was set over against that of the warrior who depended upon him. This growing class-consciousness was indicated even in the earlier hymns of the Rig-Veda. Some of the priests or rishis had already attained renown for their skill; one of them was even looked upon as the founder of the race—the Hindu Adam—a kind of creator; but no priest was as yet classed with the gods, a misfortune which befell him in the Atharva-Veda.

The third Aryan class—the Vaiçyas—was the commissary department of this roving army. Undoubtedly the less fit, those inferior in wit and energy, formed this class. They were the herdsmen, and probably with the women the collectors of the harvest. It was again the press of circumstances—their roving, warlike state—that forced the food production or collection upon a special class. There is no further light upon the condition of the Vaiçyas, for the only source of description has come from the hands of the priests, in the production of whose consciousness the herdsmen seem to have played little or no part. This result was but natural;

the priest derived his food and property from the warrior as payment for gaining the favor of the gods for him; the warrior was served with meat and grain by the Vaiçyas to whom he furnished protection from the enemy and the forces of nature; therefore it was only indirectly that the priest and the herdsman were related.

The warrior came to consciousness of himself and his social function through his relation to the Brahmans, on whom he was dependent, and the Vaiçyas, who bore the lesser value for him. With the conquest there came to be a fourth class—the conquered Dravidians, who were called Sūdras and were practically slaves. Taken all in all, the hymns of the Rig-Veda point to this era as fairly flexible; the taboo of the social class existed only with respect to the conquered class; the Brahmans, the Kshatriyans, and Vaiçyas were united against their common foe, the native Dravidian. The caste system incipient in this social order is not realized until they are released from this common danger and begin to experience the infusion of native elements.

CHAPTER II

TRANSITION FROM VEDISM TO BRAHMANISM

To the sporadic investigator Indian thought is the symbol of quaint mysteries fringing about the ideas of God and the soul, the long journeys of the soul in transmigration from animal to animal or man, and its unique technique tending to a life of subjective, negative, and pessimistic countenance. This is quite at variance with the type of life described in the Rig-Veda; and at once there is projected the problem: How can such conflicting views have arisen among the same people in the same country?

This subjective, mystic form of Indian thought is first met in the Upanishads—the records of philosophical Brahmanism. Between the Rig-Veda and the Upanishads is a period of probably five to ten centuries. The chief literature that comes in this period is made up of later additions to the Rig-Veda, Books IX, I, and X, the Atharva-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, and the Brāhmaṇas. Social, political, and territorial changes have also taken place. The last Rig-Veda hymns indicate that the Aryan tribes had now reached the Ganges Valley; here they had passed from a country where desert and river were obstacles to advance to a land of plenty—a land of hot sun and tropical products ready for the taking. They passed from a period of struggle to one of ease. It was here also that the tribes came into confederation. The *Mahābhārata*, a work undoubtedly centuries long in construction, relates the histories and struggles of the tribes which were finally united under the name Kurus. The composition of the epic is thought to have occupied the period from the fourth century B.C. to the fourth century A.D. Some of the Upanishads were as early as the sixth century B.C. and some came well within the Christian era. The *bharata* is mentioned several times in the Brāhmaṇas. It therefore seems safe to conjecture that the coalescence of the tribes occurred at about the time that they set up permanent homes in the western portion of the Ganges Valley. Sanskrit authorities put the birthplace of the Atharva-Veda, of Brahmanism, and of

the epics—the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*—in this part of the Ganges Valley. The Rig-Veda religion was the revelation of poets and sages, utilized by a more or less flexible order of priests. The Upanishads show that the priesthood had now become a firmly established stratum of society, whose interests were jealously guarded, and whose sacredness was preserved by elaborate social restriction. We see, therefore, that this era of transition from an objective, free thought to a subjective and restricted thought was marked by a crystallization of social classes, by a unification of political groups, and by the establishment of permanent homes and activities.

A. DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTION OF "BRAHMAN"

Not less marked were the changes in content of thought. This may be traced in three lines of development which converge and become identical in the Upanishads. These are: (1) the development of the Brahman idea, (2) the monistic tendency, and (3) the growth of the Ātman idea.

The word "brahman" is very old; it is found everywhere in the older collection of Rig-Veda hymns. Many scholars contend for or against its relation to the Zend word "baresman"; there is a considerable difficulty in the root-form transitions, but evidence on the whole seems to favor this association.[1] Whether or not we choose to accept this etymological relation, the meaning underlying these two words is very similar. Each had originally an objective significance. "Thus baresman as a thing extended, lifted up, presented, is the sacred bundle of twigs in the hands of the Mazdan priest. There is abundant evidence in the texts of the Yasna that the uplifted baresman in the hands of the priest was regarded as an emblem of adoration, prayer, and praise."[2] Throughout the early Rig-Veda brahman is used as hymn or song or praise.

> "Him have I sung with my best song and praises [bráhman],
> Indra of ancient birth and Everlasting.
> For prayer and songs [bráhman] in him are concentrated:
> Let land wax mighty when addressed to Indra."[3]

[1] Griswold, *Brahman.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[3] R.-V. VI. 38. 3.

"Of all our hymns [brâhman] accept the invocation,
List to my prayers and hear the songs I sing you."[1]

"To him your matchless mighty One, unconquerable Conqueror,
Sing forth the prayer [brâhman] which gods have given."[2]

Here there was no essential difference between prayer and hymn. Both were addresses to the gods, ready-made and established, and neither had subjective force. They were literally the thing lifted up to the gods. Brahman then was wholly objective and ritualistic in its use. The Aryans' belief in the efficacy of brahman is illustrated by the following verse from the Rig-Veda:

Now lauded for thine aid, Heroic Indra,
Sped by our prayer, wax mighty in thy body.[3]

In the later collection of the tenth book there frequently appears the name of Bṛihaspati, which was equivalent to Brahmanaspati. This latter word meant "Lord of Prayer." The hymn or prayer used in the service came to have such significance, its power was so prime in the sacrifice that it became lifted to the rank of a divinity. Probably even here Brahman was altogether objective, though it undoubtedly points to its later use as the universal and underlying value of the spoken word.

The Atharva-Veda presents us with a new conception—brâhman is now incantation or "spell"; also brahman is "worship." At this period the magic formula or charm was the method of worship, hence the two words can be used interchangeably. In each case the sense of the word was still objective.

"I thrust them forth with mind, forth with intent and incantation [brâhman]: forth with branch of tree, of açvattha, we thrust them."[4]

"I sharpen up thy powers with incantation [brâhman]."[5]

Likewise in this Veda brâhman may mean the sacred word or text:

"For whom the bright soma purifies itself, adorned with sacred words."[6]

In the Çatapatha Brāhmaṇa the gods in a quarrel say to each other:

Well then let us try to overcome one another by speech, by sacred unit [brâhman].[7]

[1] R.-V. VI. 69. 4.
[2] R.-V. VIII. 32. 27.
[3] R.-V. VII. 19. 11.
[4] A.-V. III. 6. 8.
[5] A.-V. III. 2. 5.
[6] A.-V. IV. 24. 4.
[7] Çat. Brāh. I. 5. 4. 6.

With the elaboration of the sacred texts and the necessity of teaching them, the subjective sense of the word emerges, and brahman becomes sacred knowledge of these texts, sacred wisdom. From the neuter bráhman early came the masculine brahmán, signifying priest: thence the whole priesthood or social division came to be called Brahmans. The commentaries on the Vedas were called Bráhmaṇas; the religion itself was Brahmanism. Each of these took on a sacredness because of its function in relation to brahman. The universality of the brahman idea developed, not only in the concrete deity form of Brahmanaspati, but in its concrete relatedness to all things. "The brahmán is invoker; the brahmán is the sacrifice; by brahmán the sacrificial posts are set up; the officiating priest is born from brahmán; within the brahmán is put oblation. The brahmán is the sacrificial spoon filled with ghee; by brahmán is the sacrificial hearth set up; and the brahmán is the essence of the sacrifice—the priests that are oblation makers."[1] Though Brahmanaspati was set up beside the nature-gods, he is less concrete than these earlier forms; hence it is not with much surprise that we follow its transition to mystic and abstract Brahman. "Whoever knows the brahmán in man, they know the exalted one."[2] "Where the brahmán knowing gods worship the chief Brahman, whoso verily knoweth them eye to eye, he may be a Brahman, a knower."[3] But abstraction, universality, and unity were brought all together and approached the Upanishad conception of Brahman, when the seer said: "He who is set over both what is and what is to be and everything and whoso alone is the heaven—to that chief brahmán be homage."[4] The Brāhmaṇas continue the preparing of the way for the Upanishad Brahman: "This Brahman has nothing before and nothing after it."[5] "Brahman is the self-existent: reverence to Brahman."[6]

Thus has been traced a variety of changes in the import of brahman: its objective phases were hymns, texts, spells; its subjective, sacred word or wisdom—sacred knowledge; then came an approach to an immanent significance, kin to the Upanishad

[1] A.-V. XIX. 42. 1, 2.

[2] A.-V. X. 7. 17.

[3] A.-V. X. 7. 24.

[4] A.-V. X. 8. 1.

[5] Çat. Brāh. X. 3. 5. 11.

[6] Çat. Brāh. X. 6. 5. 9.

idea. As corollaries to this development came the rise of (1) brahmân, the masculine, meaning priest; (2) brahmacārin, the vedic student; (3) Brahman, the priesthood and caste. These corollaries represent a correspondent social remodeling of which it will be necessary to speak later.

B. THE MONISTIC TENDENCY

Not less significant was the growth of the monistic tendency; its roots likewise were found in the earlier parts of the Rig-Veda, and its culmination was reached in the Upanishads. A study of the gods of the Rig-Veda reveals their similarity and also the paucity of their qualifications. The gods were rich, powerful, adorable, healers of disease, preservers and givers of health and wealth. The functions of the particular god are not clearly set forth. The functions of one god may differ as in the case of Agni, who was a god of the hearth, god of the sacrifice, and god of the sun-fire. The Aryans make a very general classification of their gods, as follows: sky-gods and earth-gods, with sometimes gods of the atmosphere. The early tendency toward unity can be seen, not only in this indefiniteness of function, but in their dual gods—such as Varuna-Mitra and Indra-Varuna. The next step is found in the Viçve Devas—all-gods; here an overlapping function is recognized for many gods.

> To what is One, sages give many a title:
> They call it Agni, Yarma, Mātariçvan.[1]

In the additions to the Rig-Veda this one reality was usually represented as a great giant, Purusha, sometimes called Prajāpati. He was physical, cosmic substance from which the whole universe was constructed. This great unified objective Reality retained his naïve form with great popularity throughout the Atharva-Veda and was recognized in the Brāhmaṇas. With this type of god begin the great cosmological questions "Whence?" and "How?" Purusha was the victim of the sacrifice; from the dripping were formed the creatures, as well as hymns, spells, and charms. "The Brahman was his mouth, of both his arms were

[1] R.-V. I. 164. 46.

the Rajana made. His thighs became the Vaiçya, from his feet the Sūdra was produced. The moon was gendered from his mind, and from his eye the sun had birth; Indra and Agni from his mouth were born, and Vāyu from his breath."[1] It is impossible to say whether any significance can be attached to the fact that the Brahman, Indra, Agni, and Vayu all arise from the same part of Purusha, but the coincidence, if it is such, is at least noteworthy. Griffith's footnote to his translation of this will illustrate the attitude:

> Purusha, embodied Spirit, or Man personified and regarded as Soul and original source of the universe, the personal and life-giving principle in all animated beings, is said to have a "thousand," that is, "innumerable heads," "eyes," and "feet," as being one with all created life. "A space ten figures wide": the region of the heart of man within which the soul was supposed to reside. Although as the Universal Soul he is enclosed in a space of narrow dimensions.[2]

This sort of explanation seems entirely too sophisticated. The majority of the hymns were still addressed to nature-gods, though there were a few hymns to Faith, Unanimity, New Life, and Liberality; and Desire, Fervor, and Asceticism were mentioned. But such spiritual and refined notes as these, that may be interpreted as striking, were quite counterbalanced by the hymns to the pressing-stones, hymns for the arresting of misfortune, for the removal of a rival, for the dissipation of bad dreams, and other magical performances. A hylozoistic theory of nature is much more likely under these conditions. The earliest Greek philosophers approached their problem in a similar fashion, as seen in Thales and Anaximander. The result for the Greeks was a beginning of science and philosophy; for the Hindu, of philosophy alone. That is to say, the construction side, science, was wanting.

Creation was the central question in all these early cosmological discussions. The types of creation hypotheses were three: they are constructed in analogy to (1) architecture, (2) generation, (3) the sacrifice. But the greatest of these was the sacrifice.

[1] R.-V. X. 90.

[2] Griffith, *The Hymns of the Rig-Veda*, II, 527.

"The gods as offering on the straw,
Sprinkled the first-born Purusha;
With him the gods made sacrifice,
The Rishis and the Sadhayas."[1]

"And, O thou self-existent [Viçvakarmen] Strong one,
In offering, offer up thine own self."[2]

The beauty and power of their creation conception is best shown in the one hundred and twenty-ninth hymn of the tenth book of the Rig-Veda:

1. Then there was neither being nor non-being,
Nor airy sphere nor heaven overreaching:
What covered all? and where? in whose protection?
Was there sea, a deep abyss of water?

2. Then was nor death nor anything immortal,
No night was there, nor day of appearance.
Breathed breathless then in self-existence That One,
Other than it, of any kind, there was not.

3. Darkness there was; and by the darkness covered
Was all this world at first, a wat'ry chaos;
A germ lay hidden in its secret casing,
Which by the might of heat was born as That One.

4. From whom in the beginning love developed,
Which is the primeval germ of conscious spirit:
The bond of being on non-being seeking
Poets with insight in the heart discovered.

5. Across all things their measure line extended
What was above, and what was beneath it?
Seedbearers were there and developed forces:
Beneath, self-power; above, its revelation.

6. But who knows, who is able to declare it,
Whence sprang originally this creation?
Afterwards came the gods into existence;
Who can know from whence it had its being?

7. How this creation came into existence,
Whether as uncreated or created;
He who in highest heaven looks upon it
He knows forsooth, or does not even He know?[3]

[1] R.-V. X. 90. 7.

[2] R.-V. X. 81. 5.

[3] R.-V. X. 129.

This unity takes on an abstract character when it comes to be known as Brahmanaspati, or as Vāc. Vāc was the god of speech and was addressed as immanent, all-existent Word. A similar conception is found in the Jewish Torah and in the Logos of the Stoics. But these were only stepping-stones to the Brahman idea of unity.

This groping after unity was fostered by the Atharva-Veda in its turn. This Veda was a re-echoing of popular beliefs and customs and a forecast of Brahmanism. Its content was largely spells and charms, intermixed with strange mystical verses whose atmosphere was very kin to the charms, but whose words were suggestive of their search for truth. The gods of this Veda were the same, but they had lost their spontaneity and charm, and had become puppets of hieratic exhibitions. Their individuality was lost, and in its place was the recognition of a Oneness which they represented. "The Rudra that is in the fire, that is within the waters, that entered the herbs, the plants, that shaped all these beings—to that Rudra, to Agni, be homage."[1] The Atharva-Veda hymn to the unknown god recalls the unsettled problem of the Greeks: "He who is soul-giving, strength-giving; of whom all, of whom even the gods, wait upon instruction: who is lord of the bipeds, who of quadrupeds—to what god may we pay worship with oblation."[2] It was at this point that the monistic tendency—expressed first in an objective physical unity—passed over into an abstract unity that was not the product of sense experience but of thought. It was the search for reality which had recognized a principle of life back of every manifestation. Here the monistic tendency coalesced with the fulfilment of the brahman development. Its product was a new religion, Brahmanism.

The Atharva-Veda, in which the principles of Brahmanism were incipient, had many functions; primarily it was a means of social adjustment. It gave formulae for settling disputes of rivals; it furnished a cure for jaundice, fever, and snake bites; it was a love potion and it instructed in religious customs. The following is the priest's prescription for jaundice:

[1] A.-V. VII. 8. 7.

[2] A.-V. IV. 2. 1.

> Up to the sun shall go thy heartache and thy jaundice;
> In the color of the red bull do we envelope thee.
> We envelope thee in red tints, unto long life. May this person go unscathed and free of yellow color.
> Into the parrots, into the ropaniokas [thrush] do we put thy jaundice: into the haridrava [yellow wag-tail] do we put thy yellowness.[1]

These hymns were a panacea for every kind of ill. Symbolism flourished and the hocus-pocus spirit was supreme.

The Brāhmaṇas are a further elaboration of the ceremonials and the spirit of the Atharva-Veda. Here springs full-fledged that greatest product of Hindu thought—Brahmanism. Brahmanism is a new product because its center has shifted with respect both to the object and to the form of worship. Brahman has replaced Indra, and naïve proxy sacrifice takes two forms: (1) ritualistic Brahmanism, as set forth in the Brāhmaṇas, and (2) philosophical Brahmanism, the essence of the Upanishads. The latter form must be reserved for a special discussion, but the first can be characterized in a few words. Ritualistic Brahmanism worships one All-Being—somber, impelling, lifeless; it is a means of an exaggerated symbolism and a perfected and unimpeachable ceremonial. It is sacrifice and magic gone to seed.

In the Rig-Veda the rajah is the center of interest; for him the chief sacrifices were maintained and the favorite god was made in his image. In the Brāhmaṇas a suspended judgment must be maintained—is it bráhman (sacred, immanent knowledge) or brahmán (the priest), or the sacrifice itself that constitutes the real center and cause of ritualistic Brahmanism? Most certainly the priest has absorbed the power and supremacy of the rajah, and the rajah is continually more dependent on his *purohita* (priest). All life must rise and fall by the magic touch of the Brahman.

Whence arose this tremendous dominion of the priest? Two new factors now come into Aryan life: (1) the Dravidian influence and (2) change of language. Upon the advance of the Aryans into the Ganges Valley, and the establishment of more permanent homes here, primitive, popular elements of religion and quaint social procedure assert themselves. This may be due to an infusion of

[1] A.-V. I. 22 (Max Müller translation).

Dravidian customs, or the relaxed condition of their own classes may permit expression of popular elements. Possibly both postulates are in a measure true, for the vedic Aryans had not gone many paces from a naïve culture, and the Code of the Manu and the Sūtras bear testimony of an early intermingling with the Dravidians. Such an intermingling would increase the already growing class-consciousness. But the greater value attaches to the second factor—change in language. This may have been indirectly due to Dravidian influence, but, however that may be, the difference in the spoken language and the texts initiated a new institution.

The Rig-Veda apprehended the priest as a necessary but flexible agent of the common good. His appreciation of his value to the sacrifice would be commensurate with his own success. These priests undoubtedly banded together later for the purpose of collaboration in perfecting their service. They were proficient in knowledge of the sacred Veda. Now came a time when the spoken language changed; this necessitated a new institution—vedic studentship—known to the Hindus as Brahmacārya. This institution was practically unknown during the Rig-Veda period. Grassman indicates that this word occurs but once in the Rig-Veda texts, and that in the latter part of the tenth book.[1] It seems fair to maintain that the vedic study had not the importance that it attained in the Atharva-Veda, where there are many references to it. One entire hymn is dedicated to the brahmacārin. As a small boy he is taken to the home of a teacher and becomes an apprentice. He enters with a kind of initiation ceremony. "The teacher taking him in charge makes the vedic student an embryo within; he bears him in his belly three nights; the gods gather unto him to see him born again." The hymn further relates that he wears an antelope skin, begs, collects fuel, lets his hair grow long, looks after the sacrificial fires, and tends the house of the teacher. The period of apprenticeship is usually twelve years, at the end of which time he goes home to marry. This period has been known to last thirty-two years, or even a lifetime. Theoretically this was the program for youths of the three upper classes, all of whom could be "twice-born," but in all probability it was seldom carried beyond the Brahman caste.

[1] See Grassman, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda*, R.-V. X. 109. 5.

This religious initiation may have originated in more primitive and tribal initiation. Such, at least, is the belief of Lippert. He points out that the Rajput lord was invested with his authority through the medium of a forehead sign which was filled with blood from the toe or thumb of a Bheel (Dravidian).[1] Much of the ceremony was dropped and the painting alone remained. There seem to be no traces of initiation in the earlier Veda, but the coincidence of the first emphasis upon the brahmacārin's function and the revival of popular elements of religion in the Atharva-Veda may form sufficient basis for such an assumption. Later Hinduism contains survivals of such activities, but how far back they date it is impossible to say. The worshipers of Çiva and Vishṇu today are distinguished by forehead signs somewhat like tatoos.

The importance of the brahmacārin, however, is not to be denied. He was the source of resuscitation of the priesthood and assisted in its crystallization. The numbers of those who could read the Veda must have been increasingly fewer; they become a class apart and aware of their own unique position. Vedic studentship was the means to the most precious thing in Hindu life. With this sacred knowledge the priests had power and control; thus in their own beings they held the key to Hindu life. This gave life a subjective turn, which was increased by the difference of opinion which arose in their discussion and interpretations of the texts. In the beginning this discussion was greatly in disfavor. The students were expected to accept the knowledge of the teacher as taught. The exclusiveness of the Brahmans is shown in the occasional stories that are told of lower classmen who desired to study the Vedas; they were refused until they could perform a feat or show in some way their eligibility. The Brahman is well set off by this occupation involving expert knowledge and is duly conscious now of this power.

This, then, brings us to a conclusion of conditions existent at the ushering in of Brahmanism. Caste had become firmly established through development of occupation, particularly the power of the priesthood, and through the distinction of conquered and conquerors. Caste means color. This custom of setting aside the slave or conquered is effected automatically through group

[1] Lippert, *Kulturgeschichte*, II, 348.

solidarity. These conditions and causes are summarized effectively by Macdonell, who taboos the priest.[1] This unified and hardened social system corresponds to the pantheistic aspect of Brahmanism; it is a universal system of thought, covering the monistic tendency and the abstract conception of Brahman. Subjectivity of thought is an underlying, fermenting condition which came to real definition in the Upanishads, but partially through this institution of vedic studentship, as just indicated.

[1] See Macdonell, "The Early History of Caste," *American Historical Review*, January, 1914.

CHAPTER III

THEORY OF THE SACRIFICE

The absorbing feature of the vedic worship was the sacrifice; it gained even greater power in ritualistic Brahmanism. In the latter the details of the sacrifice were more important than the god invoked. But throughout this variation the purpose and conception underlying the sacrifice remained the same. The most naïve statement of its meaning is found in the Atharva-Veda, where primitive elements had been revived or infused into the experience of the period.

It becomes necessary, then, to study the essentials of religious culture as found in the most primitive peoples. Here there is no sacrifice in the customary sense of conceiving sacrifice, but a rite involving all the intenseness and exactness of the sacrifice. These ceremonials are concerned with the clan totem, which may be a plant or an animal. A most intimate relation exists between the totem and the group—an identity of the two—a kind of participation that insures the life of the community.

> The English expedition to the Strait of Torres gives confirmation to these facts. There is a mystical affinity between the members of a clan and their totem. This is an idea deeply impressed on them, and it is evidently of prime import. More than once they have said with emphasis: augund (the totem) is the same thing as relationship: the same as family. They admit a definite physiological and psychological resemblance between the human members and the animal members of the clan. There is scarcely doubt that this feeling reacts on the members of the clan, and induces them to live according to the traditional character of their totem. Thus, according to what they have told us, the following clans are war-like: the cassowary, the crocodile, the snake, the shark; the rayfish, the sea-hare are peaceful.[1]

During the communal ceremony the participants enact the scene that they desire to have follow, and they act like the totem animal. Such dramatic activities precede the hunt or the fishing expedition. The totem is the chief food or the thing that had at one time been such. Through its scarcity the ceremonial for

[1] Lévy-Bruhl, *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures*, p. 285.

its increase arose. This is illustrated in Spencer and Gillen's very valuable study of Australian natives. The Intichiuma ceremonies were of this nature. "The object of increasing the numbers of the totem is, in all cases, such as that of Hakea or Iuriokurs or plum tree amongst the plants, or the kangaroo, euro, lizard, snake, and so forth, amongst animals, in which the totemic animal or plant is an article of food, that of increasing the food supply."[1]

The scarcity of the totem, and therefore the taboo placed upon it as a regular food source, gave it an additional value at the feast or at the sacrifice. Not only was it a delicacy to the savage palate, but it attained sanctity through its power of reviving and restoring the partaker. Meat, if rarely eaten, acts as a stimulant. The value of food for social unity, for personal gratification, and even for relief for physical distress is remarkable. The human spirit is much more approachable after a satisfactory repast. Appeals for philanthropic contributions are strengthened by association about a common board. And it is not wholly the bringing together of numbers, but the satisfaction gained from food that releases the spirit, relaxes the attitude, and gives opportunity for play of impulse. "It is truer then to say that the object was sacred because it was eaten with satisfaction than to say it was eaten because it was sacred and because man sought to worship it."[2]

But the food was not the only source of stimulation in the ceremonial. The eating of the sacred feast was a communal meal; the emotional element thus induced would act also as an enlivener; every ceremonial was accompanied by gestures and language which fixed the attention of the listener and placed him *en rapport* with the participants. There always occurred, therefore, a physical and mental exhilaration and revivification of the worshiper. The growing significance of the totem, its increasing sacredness, set it apart from the clan. It possessed a mysterious and magical power that was sought by the participant. Thus arose the gods; they were facts set apart as focusing the meanings of the clan. The earliest forms of these were concerned with the food supply; they were natural forces that helped or hindered the harvests.

[1] Spencer and Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 207.

[2] E. S. Ames, *Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 120.

Frazer insists that these forms were all related to the "corn-spirit."[1] Earth, the seasons, the wind, the moon, and the sun were all contributors to the welfare of the tribe. Curious survivals of this are seen in modern Euporean planting ceremonies and in the insistence in many places of planting on the dark of the moon. The primitive man's attitude toward all nature was social. With the building up of the conception of the person these nature-gods gain varying degrees of personification. The more flexible the state of society, the more such an individualization occurs. But whether it be the god-form or the primeval food-object, each maintains its sacredness because it has the vital principle, the *mana.*

The taboos of the totem and of the sacrifice are comparable; the Jewish regulations concerning the meat from the sacrifice were most severe; the uncleanness which attached to one who had broken the taboo must be purified with its appropriate ceremony before contact with the group could be made again. The same exactly is true for the Indian. The sacrifice was a continuation of the old totem meal. In the majority of cases it, too, was communal; the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Hebrews thus celebrated it. These feasts have undergone many transformations and may seem to have strayed far from their original religious import, as instanced in the Olympic games,[2] yet the essential fact remained—the communal ideal and emotion. It is here that a variation is found in Vedism, and this may be one of the contributing factors to the formation of a special priesthood and to the change in the social life that followed, as has been suggested above. The Indian sacrifice was for the high-class individual primarily; it has always been an aristocratic religion that the greater part of the literature portrays. This sacrifice grew more complex with the growth of a special priesthood; undoubtedly these two facts developed together, and it would be impossible to establish which was the cause and which the effect. The sacred hymns became elaborate systems of exercise, each detail of which must be followed as precisely as the drama played at the totem feast. The old means of physical and mental stimulation remained: the animal sacrifice was eaten and the hymns were the source of union of mental attitude between

[1] See Frazer, *The Golden Bough.*

[2] See Jane Harrison, *Themis.*

god and worshiper. Here usually the myth of the hymn related the life of the god—it was a formulation of his characteristics and powers which the sacrificer desired to take on. The sacrificer wanted the physical power, the courage and success of Indra, or the mercy of Varuna, or the joy of Soma. So it was that the hunter ate the meat of the lion or drank the blood of the bear that he might be like the lion and the bear. How close is the feeling of the native who insists that he is not related to the kangaroo but is the kangaroo, and the Brahman priest who becomes a god by virtue of his efficient action in the sacrifice! The priest recognizes his social standing in the Pantheon—he is a human god—and recognizes his power of infusing new life into the worshiper through his utterance of the mystic symbols at the sacrifice. He, too, possesses the *mana*.

Among the Indians the cow was the principal sacred animal; other forms were occasionally used, but the typical sacrifice was the cow. Early Aryan nomadic life was suited to the appearance of this type of sacred animal. The Semite sheep also appeared in a nomadic background. Lesser gifts might be brought to the Jewish temple, such as turtledoves. In the same manner a rice offering was sometimes made in the Indus Valley. When the Aryans came to the Ganges Valley and took on their new life of a more agricultural turn, the rice was frequently brought, and occasionally a goat. The horse sacrifice was the privilege of the rajah. The prime importance of the cow is seen also in the accessories of the sacrifice, *ghee* (butter) and milk. Each one of these has a special function, being used to pour into the fire or to sanctify the altar by being smeared over its posts. To the Hindu the essentials of the sacrifice were (1) the cow, (2) the fire, and (3) the soma. Fire has always been an object of awe and attention and has been granted purificatory and transforming power by many peoples. It becomes an object of worship itself; among the Indians Agni was second only to Indra. It is the chief god of the priests; it shares with him the function of making the god one with the worshiper. It changes the material sacrifice, while the priest through his formulae of mystic phrases centers the attention of the sacrificer. It has been always closely associated with the idea

of generation. As the early philosophers said, "Through tapas (heat) was generation, creation began." Creation was a sacrifice, it is to be remembered; and creation is a becoming other than is. Heraclitus the Obscure presents a similar service of fire when he makes it the symbol of his system of becoming.

A second factor of the sacrifice is soma—the fermented juice of the soma plant. In the Atharva-Veda it is called the "primeval soul of the sacrifice."[1] Soma is worshiped as a special divinity and concludes the process of transformation. Soma was poured over the sacrifice and also served as a drink for the sacrificer. Indra was the great soma-drinker; it was the source of his power and joy. "Indra who in the wild delights of Soma juice considers well all holy Laws among the gods."[2] "Indra, whom Sacrifice shall strengthen, Soma, and song, and hymn and praises and devotion. Whom dawn shall strengthen when the night departeth, Indra whom days shall strengthen, months and autumns."[3] But what is really here is the reflection of the effervescent illusion that the sacrificer experiences upon drinking the fermented soma juice. He is re-created in this process; his body is energized; his mind is quickened. "The sacrifice is a constant increasing of energy," says Oltramare.[4] This method is more effective than the simple eating of food; the results are obtained more rapidly and more surely. Soma service was in some senses an improvement over the old totem feast. Where the clan is beginning to break up, a stronger agent is necessary to produce the religious attitude, either from the side of the food and drink or from that of the hypnotic power of the priest or medicine man. This is simply saying that tenser methods must be used for focusing attention upon "collective representations." Through the sacrifice there is re-established an association with the god. This condition is most accurately borne out in the communal sacrifice, for conditions of attention are there easier to obtain. This attention reconstructs the group spirit. Other types of sacrifice accomplish this in a lesser degree; thus it is not to be expected that the aristocratic and individual

[1] A.-V. IX. 2. 10.
[2] R.-V. VIII. 32. 28.
[3] R.-V. VI. 38. 4.
[4] P. Oltramare, *Les Idées théosophiques dans l'Inde*, p. 24.

religious service of the Hindus could be as effective as the more concentrated types.

But the vital thing to be remembered is that through the sacrifice not only the worshiper but the god comes to new life. It is not simply the cow, the sacred animal, that dies on the altar. It is the god that gives up his life that the sacrificer may be born again. Just as the primitive man ate his totem, so the Semites ate their god, testifies Robertson Smith.[1] This theory is corroborated for the Greeks in the Dionysius worship.[2] But it is not necessary to bring such analogies to support this theory for Hindu worship; the Hindu frankly tells you that he eats his god. The Rig-Veda furnishes many expressions of the similitude of their favorite god, Indra, and the bull; furthermore, Indra is called the bull, is identified with the bull. Then it is Indra as well as the bull that dies on the altar. "Sacrificial butter he bears; *ghee* is his seed; thousandfold prosperity—that they call the sacrifice: the bull, clothing himself in Indra's form—let him, O gods, come propitious to us, being given. Indra's force, Varuna's two arms, the Açvins' two shoulders, of the Maruts his hump: they who are wise, poets, who are skillful call him Bṛihaspati brought together."[3] The god is not fully destroyed on the altar; this same hymn tells us that the "sacrifice burns him not." The sacrifice is a means of transforming, making better; it permits the giving out of the life-principle which is in everything and can never be destroyed, though it may be transformed. "Do ye, releasing the seed of the being, assign progress to the sacrificer, O gods."[4] This form of worship illustrates the oneness of all life quite as much as the totem belief. Man and god are not clearly discriminated here; nor are the animal and the god distinguished clearly, which is a conception no more singular than the totem idea.

The greatest product of the sacrifice is a re-created god. The god rises out of his ashes a different and greater manifestation of the life-principle. Not that these worshipers are conscious of the thing that happens, at least, fully conscious. The life-principle is

[1] See Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites.*

[2] Cf. Jane Harrison, *Themis.*

[3] A.-V. IX. 4. 7. 8.

[4] A.-V. II. 34. 2.

a felt-something back of everything which gains different forms at different times. The process is quite a subjective one and is merely induced by the sacrificer. Through the process of the sacrifice the worshiper is put in an attitude or mood that fosters reconstructive thought. That is to say, he is made one with his group and is placed in an emotional attitude which fosters conceptional activity. Out of this mental state a new conception or feeling of divinity emerges. This takes the line of least resistance; that is, it is formulated by his social situation and social needs and desires. The old concept dies to give place to the new; the god-form dies to be resurrected in new form in due time. It is not a coincidence that it was at the season of the Feast of the Passover that the Christ died and was raised again on the third day. Without such death and resurrection, without such remodeling of group-consciousness, we should indeed perish.

It is through such an evolution of group-consciousness with the sacrifice as its vehicle that Indian religious thought has come. The sacrifice was the vehicle of the development of the monistic tendency—that long journey from Indra to Prajāpati and Brahmanaspati. The sacrifice also transformed the life-principle (after centuries of experiment) from a cosmic energy to a sacred wisdom that dwells not with every individual, it is true, but within the revered priest.

But it is now that a change occurs in the valuation and consequently in the function of the sacrifice in the development of Hindu thought. The Indian priests began to recognize, consciously or unconsciously, that the secret of their power lay in their control of the sacrifice; for the sacrifice had been the source of inspiration and spiritual renewal, as also of material goods. The priesthood in seeking for the means of perfecting its vocation came to center attention upon the sacrifice. Whenever an activity, social or individual, becomes the victim of introspection and analysis, it suffers the fate of a dissected organism; life escapes and only the skeleton and mute organs remain. It is with this feeling that H. Fielding Hall writes, "Forms and ceremonies are but the tombs of dead truths." This consciously or unconsciously introspective attitude of the priesthood is evidenced by the development during this

period of the caste system from the freer classes of society of earlier times. Thus, with ritualistic Brahmanism, Hindu experience reaches a stage of arrested development.

SACRIFICIAL OR RITUALISTIC BRAHMANISM

Up to this point Hindu life had been of one growth; social conditions had been changing and religious ideas maturing. This arrestment appears (1) in social conditions, (2) in the type of god-conception, (3) in the form of worship. In the first case, social distinction, friction, and competition became the subject of rigid definition and law, which was framed in the Gṛihya Sūtras and the Code of Manu. This was the formulation of the caste system, which is a perfected social habit against which there is no power of reconstruction. In the second case, the religious culmination in pantheism illustrates a completed concept. There is no element within such a being that is imperfect and that could be a factor in reconstruction. Pantheism is an empty universal, just as caste is. In the third place, the method, the sacrifice, became an end in place of a means of worship; the mechanism itself gradually became the center of interest; the sacrifice became so elaborate and so completely defined, so unchangeable in every point, that again progress was impossible.

In the Rig-Veda the sacrifice had been pretty flexible; it lent itself to the whims and inspiration of the priest and worshiper, and, as stated before, it was the vehicle of changing conceptions and of progress and of religious consciousness. With ritualistic Brahmanism there is a transition. In the Atharva-Veda, and the Brāhmaṇas particularly, Brahman had been identified with everything—the gods, the earth and its elements, the visible heavens, unseen forces—that is to say, everything objective. In ritualistic Brahmanism the Brahman of the Upanishads had not completely emerged, and the old gods were fast losing their hold. These gods were brought to earth and made to assume the function of the priest; Indra, Agni, Varuna, Savitar, and the other gods in turn are made to officiate at the sacrifice just as the priest would do. " 'Agni's priestly duty, that means salvation'—the means of salvation assuredly is the sacrifice; 'may he know the sacrifice' is what he

thereby says."[1] The next step is taken when the tables are turned and the priests are called human gods. "And this the true knowledge belongs to the gods alone, and indeed whoever knows this is not a man, but one of the gods."[2] "For to the Brahman belongs the fulfilment of wishes; it is with the fulfilment of wishes he (Brahman) thus endows him (the sacrifice)."[3] Thus the gods and priests are put on a par. The priests had been the adjusters and commentators on the sacrifice. They perfected it, until finally came the idea that the formulae of the sacrifice must not be changed in the slightest manner. It became all-perfect, all-wise, and all-powerful. Neither gods nor men could trifle with it. "The sacrifice fled away from the gods. The gods called out after it, 'Listen to to us! come back to us!' It replied, 'So be it!' and returned to the gods; and with what had thus returned to them, the gods worshiped; and by worshipping with it became the gods they now are."[4] "The sacrifice came to be; it came to be here; it was propagated; it increased again; it became overlord of the gods; let it assign wealth to us."[5] But the chief argument for the supremacy of the sacrifice in this period is the small emphasis that is given the gods, the want of consideration of the habits, lives, and characteristics of the gods. They become figureheads. On the other hand, the sacrifice is the only topic of discussion; to know its details completely and to follow these exactly is the whole duty of the priest. The sacrificial activity has become an abstraction; its content, the gods, has been lost or rendered worthless. The sacrifice is no longer a device for renovating the gods.

Already the priests had emphasized knowledge of the Veda, and the brahmacārin's function increased this value. Prior to this time they had had a meager conception of brahman as knowledge, but even this knowledge had been more objective than subjective. Knowledge was erudition; it was a thing taught, a thing taken in, not a thing wrought out of the experience of the thinker. This knowledge was like the initiation sign on the forehead; it served to catalogue or classify him with a certain "twice-born"

[1] Çat. Brāh. I. 5. 2. 1.

[2] Çat. Brāh. X. 3. 5. 13.

[3] Çat. Brāh. XIII. 1. 5. 6.

[4] Çat. Brāh. I. 5. 2. 6.

[5] A.-V. VII. 5. 2.

group, and put him *en rapport* with the group; it developed his class-consciousness. The transition from the stress upon sacrificial activity to emphasis upon knowledge of the sacrifice is made through the prevalent symbolism of the period.

"Verily, this sacrifice is the same as this blowing [wind, soul]; it is this that they wish to secure who take the vow of initiation for a year."[1] "Verily, the Agnihotri cow is the speech of the Agnihotri and her calf is its mind. Now these, mind and speech, whilst being one and the same, are, as it were, distant from each other: therefore they tie up the calf and its mother with one and the same rope; and the fire, indeed, is faith, and the ghee, truth."[2] "Now therefore it would seem to follow that both he who knows this [the true meaning of the syllable Om], and he who does not, perform the same sacrifice. But this is not so, for knowledge and ignorance are different. The Sacrifice which a man performs with knowledge, faith, and the Upanishad is more powerful."[3] "Considering sacrifice and good works as the best, these fools know no higher good, and having enjoyed their reward on the height of heaven gained by good works, they enter into this world or a lower one. Let a Brahman, after he has examined all these worlds which are gained by works, acquire freedom from desires."[4]

Modern commentaries suggest that this efficacy of knowledge rather than works was the conception of the sages or sannyasins. But this knowledge is still quite as objective as the formulae and rites of sacrifice. Indian thought is not yet subjective; it is only arriving at a condition where subjectivity is possible. The development of caste, the change of language and the ensuing rise of vedic studentship, and the hardening and elaborating of sacrificial formulae were all elements that paved the way for a subjective type of thought, but could not produce it.

All these facts centered about one class of people and were initiated by them—the priests; the Brahman's influence was largely responsible for caste even though we accept its growth as unconscious—and through them the ritual gained its value.

Everywhere they express the conservative element of life. Such conditions are not found in either Hebrew or Egyptian priesthood, each a case of a powerful priesthood. It must be conceded that in every class of people there is a conservative element, and such conservation is often vital to the life of a people. The pro-

[1] Çat. Brāh. I. 1. 1.

[2] Çat. Brāh. XI. 3. 1. 1.

[3] Chandogya Up. I. 1. 10. 8.

[4] Muṇḍaka Up. I. 2. 10. 12.

tection of moral and religious ideals of a people is as necessary as their food supply, and such protection is the duty of a priesthood; yet there must also be regeneration of religious and social ideas, and this may likewise be the duty or opportunity of the priesthood. It was the prophets of Israel that led them to moral consciousness and that chose a king and leader when political conditions demanded a change. In Egypt the priesthood was an integral part of common life and not set apart as in India. The Egyptian priest was treasurer and high counselor of state as well as a religious official and was therefore interested in all matters relating to the people and the state. Later the Pharaoh was recognized as the high priest, and he alone dared to enter yearly the Holy of Holies and worship for the people. Gods were made and fell at his dictate. This union of state and religion seemed to keep the priests active and alive to the needs of the people.[1] Not so in India; and its history from ritualistic Brahmanism to the invasion of the Mohammedans is a story of unsuccessful effort at reconstruction. It is with the beginnings of these attempted innovations that we find the rise of subjectivity.

[1] Steindorff, *Religion of the Ancient Egyptians.*

CHAPTER IV

PHILOSOPHICAL BRAHMANISM

The first of the innovators were probably princes and kings from the eastern portion of the Ganges Valley. Ritualistic Brahmanism and the epics were the products of the older settlement along the banks of the upper Ganges. The idea that for a time threatened this old order of things was the ātman conception. Around this idea moves that first revolt known as philosophical Brahmanism. Some writers see in this movement, not a revolt, but a simple refinement of earlier thought. The following pages are intended to show that every phase of the situation points to these as a revolt.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ĀTMAN IDEA

The Sanskrit word *ātman* has had an interesting history; it has had a long history, but the Upanishad meaning is a late development. It has been suggested that *ātman* comes from the root *an*, which means "to breathe." As such it would be associated with *prāṇa* and its various forms, and this really happens. The word is found a number of times in the Rig-Veda; in the earlier hymns it had the physical and objective sense entirely. It is not strange that such an association should have been made with respect to self and spirit. The majority of primitive peoples are concerned with the breathing process and its relations to life. Grassman states that the Rig-Veda gives ātman five differentiations; the greatest of these is breath.

> "Come like vital air [ātman] to bodies."[1]

> "The wind, thy breath [ātman], hath sound through the region
> Like a wild beast that seeks his food in pastures."[2]

These passages show its very close relation to the gods Vāyu and Vāta, the first of which represents the god, the second the element; both are here objective, but their use is sufficient to indi-

[1] R.-V. I. 37. 7.

[2] R.-V. VII. 87. 2.

cate their active relation to nature. The fact that there are two gods for one phenomenon may indicate two types of conception, the one freer and more comprehensive, a step nearer a spiritualization than the other. A finer degree of feeling is shown in the following: here it is essentially the body-breath, the life-breath:

> "Where is the blood of earth, the life [ātman], the spirit."[1]
>
> "Raiment is body, food [ātman] is life, and healing ointment giveth strength."[2]
>
> "The Sun receive thine eye, the wind [ātman] thy Spirit."[3]

It is the later collection of the Rig-Veda that is particularly responsible for this advance; and the third conception of life-principle or life-spirit includes the idea of energy or power. It is now the element that moves things, that keeps them going; it is still an objective aspect.

> "The soul [ātman] of all that moveth not or moveth."[4]
>
> "He holds the life [ātman] of all things fixed and moving."[5]

This life-principle has not yet dropped its magical nature, because the priest plainly used it with respect to his priestly fee (guerdon), and also for the soma which is called "the soul of the sacrifice." Grassman's fourth use of ātman is as the spirit of sickness. This is a rare usage, but not unimportant when compared with the history of the thought of other primitive people. Dreams and disease are two of the most important factors in the life and movement of early man. The dream-factor is the result of the breath or soul of another man which has been freed by sleep and which visits the first in his "dream." This can wander to and fro at will. Some tribes believe that the breath has various parts and that some of these parts leave the body during sickness—or else it is a new part that comes.[6]

> When bringing back the vanished strength,
> I hold these herbs within my hand
> The spirit [ātman] of disease departs
> Ere he can seize upon the life.[7]

[1] R.-V. I. 164. 4.

[2] R.-V. VIII. 3. 24.

[3] R.-V. X. 16. 3.

[4] R.-V. I. 115. 1.

[5] R.-V. VII. 6. 101.

[6] See Grassman, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda.*

[7] R.-V. X. 97. 11.

The fifth sense of the word is a living body; this suggests Prajāpati, the god of cosmic energy, but likewise a living body; however, it is impossible to say whether there is any relation between the universal and individual aspects here.

> Let Vṛita slaying Indra drink Soma by Saryanavan's side
> Storing up vigour in his heart [ātman], preparing to do heroic deeds.[1]

The Atharva-Veda does not advance these theories very far; it vacillates between the more magical uses of the breath and mystical phrases that presage ātman as soul.

> "May I win a horse, a cow, a soul [ātman], O man."[2]

> "Free from desire, wise, immortal, self-existent, satisfied with sap,
> Not deficient in any respect, knowing that wise, imaging young soul [ātman]—one is not afraid of death."[3]

> "Again let breath, again let soul [ātman] come unto us."[4]

This same struggle between conceptions is felt in the Brāhmaṇas and even in the Upanishads. Their hocus-pocus use of prāṇa and the essence of being as expressed in ātman are strange comparisons. The Brāhmaṇas furnish a whole family of prāṇas.[5] The breath is divided into six or seven parts. Some depart during sleep, others during exhaustion, the last at death. There is the in-breathing and the out-breathing, the up-breathing, and the down-breathing, the forward-breathing and the back-breathing, and others like unto them. Each kind of breathing has its special function in the sacrifice. The priest must breathe in a certain fashion when he lighted the fire, in another way when he poured on the soma juice. This matter of breathing was as important as any other part of the sacrificial formulae and might quite as easily interfere with its service. This degradation of a useful function corresponded to other practices of the period. That the conception is still quite physical and objective the Çatapatha Brāhmaṇas bear witness. "The Yagus is the breath, for whilst moving it generates everything here."[6] "Yagus is no other than Vāyu."[7] Vāyu,

[1] R.-V. IX. 113. 1.
[2] A.-V. IV. 9. 7.
[3] A.-V. X. 8. 44.
[4] A.-V. VI. 53. 2.
[5] Cf. Ewing, *J.A.O.S.* XXII.
[6] Çat. Brāh. X. 3. 5. 4.
[7] Çat. Brāh. X. 3. 5. 1.

it must be remembered, was the rig-vedic god of the wind. Compare with this the hymn to Vāyu of several centuries earlier, "Germ of the World, the deities' vital Spirit, this god moves ever as his will inclines him; his voice is heard, his shape is ever newless."[1]

But the voice of the companion of Yagus is making itself heard, even if it is yet feeble. There is a soul of "mystic import" that is trying to define its own meaning as well as to impart it. Its value does not depend upon an act of sacrifice, but upon its own inner being. It is knowledge, and it is the great eternal principle, which as yet is unknown and defined. The one who gains the secret of this is ready for eternal life—he ranks with the gods.

"Who is the one god? Breath and he is Brahman and they call him That [ātman]."[2] "But indeed the manifestation is Yagus, and thus with ever so small a yagus formula, the Atharvyu draws a cup of Soma, that essence is equal to both the Stotra and Sastra, and comes up to both the Stotra and Sastra: hence, however small the essence of food, it benefits the whole food and pervades the whole food. Satiation doubtless is the successful issue thereof: hence when one is satiated by food he feels like one who has succeeded. And joy, the knowledge thereof [essence is mystic import], is its soul [self—ātman]; and assuredly, all gods are of joyful soul; and this the true knowledge, belongs to the gods alone, and indeed whoever knows this is not a man, but one of the gods."[3]

On reaching the philosophic movement known as the Upanishads, the interpretation becomes much more confused and perplexing. The several Upanishads do not agree with each other on the use of ātman, nor is there always uniformity throughout a single Upanishad. The problem is everywhere concerning the nature of Brahman and his manifestations; they find him in everything; he reveals himself in all nature but assumes various forms. These meanings range from prāṇa (breath), knowledge of the sacrifice, ether, or the spirit of dreams to the idea of self as perceiving, thinking, meditating. The Aitareya Āraṇayaka Upanishad, the language of which quite resembles a Brāhmaṇa, gives Brahman as Prāṇa.

Mahidasa Aitareya, who knew this, said, "I know myself [reaching] as far as the gods, and I know the gods [reaching] as far as me. For these gods receive their gifts from hence, and are supported from hence." This is the

[1] R.-V. X. 168. 4. [2] Bṛihad. Up. III. 9. 9. [3] Çat. Brāh. X. 3. 5. 12-13.

mountain, that is to say, eye, ear, mind, speech, and breath. They call it the mountain of Brahman. He [the Prāṇa is identified with Brahman] is the life, the breath; he is being [while the givātman remains], and not-being [when the givātman departs]. "Downwards and upwards he [the wind of the breath] goes, held by food; for this up-breathing, being held back by the down-breathing, does not move forward [and leave the body altogether]." "The immortal dwells with the mortal"; . . . . for through him [the breath] all this dwells together, the bodies being clearly mortal, but this being [the breath], being immortal. These two [body and breath] go forever in different directions [the breath moving the senses of the body, the body supporting the senses of the breath: the former going upwards to another world, the body dying and remaining on earth]. They increase the one [the body] but they do not increase the other, that is, they increase these bodies [by food], but this being [breath] is immortal. He who knows this becomes immortal in that world [having become united with Hiraṇyagarba], and is seen as immortal [in the sun] by all beings, yea, by all beings.[1]

The Kaushītaki Upanishad also recognizes breath as Brahman, or the individual (ātman) expression of Brahman:

Prāṇa [breath] is Brahman, thus says Paingya. And in that prāṇa, which is Brahman, the eye stands firm behind speech, the ear behind the eye, the mind stands firm behind the ear, and the spirit behind the mind. To that prāṇa, which is Brahman, all these deities bring an offering, though he asks not for it, and thus to him who knows this, all creatures bring an offering, though he asks not for it.[2]

The more magical, sacrificial element is seen in the following:

He who knows this self which consists of sight, hearing, metre, wind, and speech, as like unto syllables, has sons, cattle, and lives his full age.[3]

Or the true self may be revealed through the dream state:

These true desires, however, are hidden by what is false; though the desires be true, they have a covering which is false. Thus, whoever belonging to us has departed this life, him we cannot gain back, so that we should see him with our eyes. Those who belong to us, whether living or departed, and whatever else there is which we wish for and do not obtain, all that we find there [if we descend into our heart, where Brahman dwells, in the ether of the heart]. There are all our true desires, hidden by what is false. As people who do not know the country, walk again and again over a gold treasure that has been hidden somewhere in the earth and do not discover it, thus do all these crea-

[1] Aitareya Āraṇyaka Upanishad I. 8. 2, 3, 5, 11–14.

[2] Kaushītaki Upanishad II. 2.

[3] Aitareya Āraṇayaka Upanishad III. 2. 2. 9.

tures day after day go into the Brahman world [they are merged in Brahman, while asleep], and yet do not discover it, because they are carried away by untruth [they do not come to themselves, i.e., they do not discover the true Self in Brahman, dwelling in the heart].[1]

A more refined interpretation is to be found in the more truly philosophic Upanishads, the Chāndogya and the Kaṭha and Svetāsvatara Upanishads:

All this is Brahman. Let a man meditate on that [visible world] as beginning, ending, and breathing in it [the Brahman]. Now man is a creature of will. According to what his will is in this world, so will he be when he has departed this life. Let him therefore have this will and belief: the intelligent, whose body is spirit, whose form is light, whose thoughts are true, whose nature is like ether [omnipresent and invisible], from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed; he who embraces all this, who never speaks and is never surprised, he is myself within the heart, smaller than a corn of rice, smaller than a corn of barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a canary seed or the kernel of a canary seed. He also is myself within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds. He from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed, who embraces all this, who never speaks and who is never surprised, he, myself within the heart, is that Brahman. When I shall have departed from thence, I shall obtain him [that Self]. He who has this faith has no doubt; thus said Sandilya, yea, thus he said.[2]

But throughout the Upanishads the highest development of ātman deals with the revelation of Brahman as a self. Now we must ask what is the nature of this self, and it is here that we would show two conflicting views of ātman incipient in the Brahman explanations, and subtly compromising in their relations. And it is in this compromise and because of it that Hindu thought recoils to an attitude of subjectivity. The later Upanishads record a temporary treaty of peace between a personal, active, hopeful self and an impersonal, itemized revelation of Brahman. The Brahmanic philosophy may be summed up in the phrases, "Brahman is Ātman" and "That art Thou." The Brahman in this equation represents the older priest view; the ātman the attempt at a new statement of reality. The contention as seen centers chiefly about the meaning of knowledge. Undoubtedly

[1] Chāndogya Up. VIII. 3. 1. 2. [2] Chāndogya Up. III. 14.

its first meaning referred to the knowledge of the priests of the sacrificial formulae, and the object of desire was to acquire power with their fellowmen through these formulae. With the raising of the problem of the new conception, ātman, the priest found it necessary to define his ideas more clearly. The history of *ātman* indicates that the soul or self was the life-principle, a kind of physical energy, that belonged to every member of the early tribe. This was given no great stress anywhere in the early literature, for just as the individual was submerged in the clan system and also submerged in the family system of land inheritance by all its living members, so the life-principle had been vital only because it was a section of the great cosmic principle. Now the Upanishads indicate a real feeling for a new type of knowledge, a self other than that which the priests favored.

"He in whom the five beings [senses] and the ether rest, him alone, I believe to be the Self."[1]

"By means of thoughts, touching, seeing, passions, the incarnate Self assumes successively in various places various forms, in accordance with his deeds, just as the body grows when food and drink are poured into it."[2]

"To him who sees, perceives, and undertakes this, the spirit springs from the self, memory springs from the Self; hope springs from the Self; so do ether, fire, water, appearance, and disappearance, food, power, understanding, reflection, consideration, will, mind, speech, names, sacred hymns, and sacrifices—aye, all this springs from the Self."[3]

Not only was this new ātman a reality in itself, it was an expression of normal, active living and the desires and hopes that accompany such.

"And he who knows this union, becomes united with offspring, cattle, fame, glory of countenance, and the world of Svarga. He lives his full age."[4]

"He recites the eighty tristichs of Ushnih. Verily, the eighty Ushnih tristichs are that world, the heaven. Whatever there is in that world of glory, greatness, wives, food and honour, also the divine being of the Devas [Brahman], may I obtain it, may I win it, may it be mine."[5]

But the contradictions are so many and the ritualistic element so frequently asserts itself, often half-garbed in the new con-

[1] Bṛihad. Up. IV. 4. 17.
[2] Svetāsvatara Up. II. 11.
[3] Chānd. Up. VIII. 26. 1.
[4] Ait. Āra. Up. III. 1. 1. 10.
[5] Ait. Āra. Up. I. 4. 3. 5.

ception, that a study of its philosophy is indeed tantalizing. Sometimes it is easier to understand the original ātman by the contention that the Brahman seems to be making against it. This is the Brahman's method of defining and defending his own conception. Undoubtedly the projector of the ātman idea meant something very vital to concrete living; whereas breath was real, thought, desire, and perception also were most intimate facts of living. But such suggestions of value in objects of thought, feeling, and action were deprived of force by their Brahman interpretation. The priest does not deny the existence of the senses, but he regrets the value that the layman puts on these aspects of being. And it is in this position that his compromise lies. For the priest and sage the self is only that which carries these forms and appearances of the real being (Brahman).

Who is he whom we meditate on as the Self? Which is the Self? That by which we see, that by which we hear, that by which we perceive smells, that by which we utter speech, that by which we distinguish sweet and not sweet, and what comes from the heart, and the mind, namely, perception, command, understanding, knowledge, wisdom, seeing, holding, thinking, considering, readiness [or suffering], remembering, conceiving, willing, breathing, loving, desiring? No, all these are various names only of Knowledge [the true Self].[1]

Here the self seems to be more what might be called a capacity of knowing; it could scarcely be identified with the content or object of knowledge or desire. A later Upanishad says:

"And the other selves [such as speech, etc.] follow the self, as his people follow the master of the house, and as the master feeds with the people, nay, as his people feed on the master, thus does this conscious self feed with the other selves, as a master with his people, and the other selves follow him, as his people follow the master. . . . . And thus he who knows this obtains pre-eminence among all beings, sovereignty, supremacy, yes, he who knows this."[2]

"'Which Self, O Yāgnavalkya, is within all?' Yāgnavalkya replied: 'He who overcomes hunger and thirst, sorrow, passion, old age and death. When Brahmans know that self and have risen above the desire for sons, wealth and new worlds, they wander about as mendicants. Therefore let a Brahman after he has done with learning wish to stand by real strength; after he has done with strength and learning he becomes a Muni; and after he has done with what is not the knowledge of Muni, and with what is the knowledge

[1] Ait. Āra. Up. II. 6. 1. 2, 3, 4. [2] Kaushītaki Up. III. 20.

of Muni, he is a Brahman. By whatever means he becomes a Brahman, he is such indeed. Everything else is evil.' "[1]

"Having understood that the senses are distinct from the Ātman and that their rising and setting [their waking and sleeping] belongs to them in their distinct existence [and not to the Ātman], a wise man grieves no more."[2]

"He [the self] cannot be reached by speech, by mind, or by the eye. How can it be apprehended except by him who says: 'He is?' "[3]

"That Self is hidden in all beings and does not shine forth, but it is seen by subtle seers through their sharp and subtle intellects."[4]

And in like manner the object of desire is defined and denied.

"Though thou hadst seen the fulfilment of all desires, the foundation of the world, the endless reward of good deeds, the shore where there is no fear, that which is magnified by praise, the wide abode, the rest, yet being wise thou hast with firm resolve dismissed it all."[5]

"A man who is free from desires and free from grief, sees the majesty of the Self by grace of the Creator [through the tranquillity of the senses]."[6]

"When all the desires that dwell in the heart cease, then mortal becomes immortal and obtains Brahman."[7]

Thus the Ātman which had yearned for a unique and real expression of itself through the normal functions of life finds itself submerged in the great cosmic principle Brahman. Hence it loses its identity and such hope of recognized individuality as it may once have had. Just as the meaning and content disappeared from the sacrifice in a former time, so the knowledge of the formulae and the knowledge of life disappeared from the ātman conception. The mere form of sacrificial activity had remained, and in like manner the abstract knowing self survived the onslaught of Brahman definition. But in each case it was the last word of the process, and as an innovation the movement failed. Ātman was everywhere knowledge or the thing known or that which they desire to know. The Upanishad was the secret doctrine of Brahman or the means of attaining Brahman, that is to say, salvation. These terms, in the end, became synonymous—"Brahman is Ātman." The object of knowledge and the knowledge process were one and

[1] Bṛihad. Up. III. 5. 1.

[2] Kaṭha Up. II. 6. 6.

[3] Kaṭha Up. II. 6. 12.

[4] Kaṭha Up. I. 3. 12.

[5] Kaṭha Up. I. 2. 11.

[6] Kaṭha Up. I. 2. 20.

[7] Kaṭha Up. II. 6. 14.

the same (the object and the subject were one). Brahman and the contemplation of Brahman made the worshiper one with Brahman. The knowing and the thing known became one and passed (as it would seem to us) into the unknowable, and this was the end and hope of the Sannāsyin. This was bliss and life(?) eternal.

"Their deeds and their Self with all his knowledge become all one in the highest Imperishable. As the flowing rivers disappear in the sea, losing their name and form, thus a wise man, freed from name and form, goes to the divine Person, who is greater than the great."[1]

"'By the words "He is" is He apprehended, and by [admitting] the reality of both [the invisible Brahman and the visible world as coming from Brahman]. When he has been apprehended by the words "He is," then his reality reveals itself.' 'When all desires that dwell in his heart cease, then the mortal becomes immortal, and obtains Brahman.' 'When all the ties of the heart are severed here on earth, then the mortal becomes immortal'—here ends the teaching."[2]

"But he replied: 'O Maitereyī, I say nothing that is bewildering. Verily beloved, that Self is imperishable, and of an indestructible nature. For when there is as it were duality, then one sees the other, one smells the other, one tastes the other, one salutes the other, one hears the other, one perceives the other, one touches the other, one knows the other; but when the Self only is all this, how should he see another, how should he smell another, how should he taste another, how should he salute another, how should he hear another, how should he touch another, how should he know another? How should he know him by whom he knows all this? That Self is to be described by No, no! He is incomprehensible, for he cannot be comprehended; he is imperishable, for he cannot perish; he is unattached, for he does not attach himself; unfettered, he does not suffer, he does not fail. How, O beloved, should he know the Knower? Thus, O Maitereyī, thou hast been instructed. Thus far goes immortality.'"[3]

So we are assured by the text itself that when the individual soul passes into bliss and unites with the Brahman it becomes itself part of the unknowable and undefined; this seems to be the very source of bliss; this is purest abstraction for the individual. Hence both Brahman and Ātman were universal elements just as was the sacrifice, though within the scope of individual activity. One of the Upanishads even suggests the idea of the senses being illu-

[1] Muṇḍaka. Up. III. 2. 7, 8.

[2] Kaṭha Up. II. 6. 13, 14, 15. [3] Bṛihad. Up. IV. 5. 14. 15.

sion (Māyā), a position which the Vedānta later very definitely assumes.[1]

Why did the ātman idea arise? An interest in the individual as such and an emphasis upon his activities come in several ways. They may follow a breaking up of the clan, when independence of action is no longer censored by a group-consciousness; also they may accompany successful clan activity which is focused in one person, such as king or chief warrior. Such conditions are eminently illustrated even in modern times. Shanghai is called the wickedest city in the world because the foreigners are not bound by the conventions of their own group, nor do they respect the customs of those among whom they live. Thus a man without a country is not only a misfortune but a menace. He breaks up a situation; and he may rebuild or he may destroy. If he does the first, he is a hero; if the second, an outcaste. In India the man who attempted to assert his independence with respect to food, occupation, or marriage was literally an outcaste. Only a negative result remains from these sporadic cases; this is found in the Code of Manu and the tremendous increase in the number of castes. But another method of individualization is seen here; this is political centralization. This grew out of the early union of the tribes. The struggle that brought this about would emphasize that which made possible the union; to them it would grant a new consciousness of the will and initiative of its leaders. These were the warriors, and from them came the ātman idea. And, just so, such authorities as Weber and Max Müller have pointed out that probably this ātman idea did not originate among the priests, but among the Kshatriyans. Richard Garbe has given this argument a popular presentation and at the same time points out the very sophistical and immoral state of the priesthood at this time. He makes it seem scarcely possible that the priests were capable of constructing so noble a product as the ātman conception. Furthermore, he cites the reference made in the Upanishads to Kshatriyan influence.[2] It seems to have been the custom for men who were eager for knowledge of reality to assemble for instruction, which eventually became discussion. The kings' courts grew to be noted

[1] See Svetāsvatara Up.

[2] Garbe, *The Philosophy of Ancient India.*

for such assemblage. Thus in the sixth book of the Bṛihadāranyaka a young Brahman, Çvetaketu Aruneya, appeared at one of these meetings. He had been instructed in the love of Brahman by his father. At the court he was asked five questions by Prince Pravahana Gaivati; but he could answer none of them. He returned and reported this to his father. Thereupon both father and son went to the court and became listeners to the interpretation of the prince.

> In word only have former sages [though Brāhmaṇas] come as pupils [to people of lower rank], but Gautama actually dwelt as a pupil [of Pravahana who was a Raganya] in order to obtain the fame of having respectfully served his master. The king said, "Do not be offended with us, neither you nor your forefathers, because this knowledge has before now never dwelt with any Brahman."[1]

A similar story is told in several of the older Upanishads, and such confirmation has its significance. It is the prince or king who appears most eager for knowledge in every case; the attitude of the Brahman is confident, sometimes even boastful. He soon finds his inefficiency. The Brahman Yāgnavalkya disputed with greater power than any of the other Brahmans. He was on a basis of free intercourse with King Janaka Vaideha—a rare courtesy of Brahman etiquette. But even he was fearful of his power, for the Upanishad relates: "Then Yāgnavalkya was fearful lest the King, having become full of understanding, should drive him from all his positions."[2] All this goes to show that the Kshatriyans had the newer thought and may have held it secretly for a considerable period before it was given to the Brahmans. Thus philosophical Brahmanism becomes a revolt against ritualistic Brahmanism and represents a struggle for supremacy of thought between Kshatriyans and Brahmans. This accounts for the inconsistencies, the vacillation of ideas, and the lack of system in the presentation of this early philosophy. The Upanishads mirror the era as it is; this literature was the product of the priests and

[1] Cf. also Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, I, 296–479, "Early Contests between the Brahmans and Kshatriyans"; Deussen, *Allgemeine Geschichte*, I, Part 2, pp. 354 ff.; Winternitz, *Geschichte der Ind. Lit.*, pp. 198–202; Bloomfield, *The Religion of the Veda*, pp. 220–27.

[2] Bṛihad. Up. IV. 3. 33.

unconsciously reveals their attempt to suppress the innovation. But the Brahmans still held the supremacy in spite of this political union, and how much of an overt conflict there may have been it is impossible to determine. As a result Kshatriyan individuality was submerged by their independence of the priesthood. The power of reconstruction of Indian society of this era lay in the warrior, but the priest refused to be reconstructed. This refusal was not open warfare, we can believe, but a system of conciliation and of absorption of Kshatriyan thought which mangled it out of all possibility of future development.

These were the conditions that changed Indian thought to an essentially subjective type. The type of life that the flexible warrior-spirit proposed was impossible because it met an arrested development in prevalent Brahmanism. Thus it was turned back upon itself. The warrior failed to find a function and could only hold within himself the things he proposed to express. For the warrior the world of sense, desire, and activity was what he wished to find real, but the Brahman refused to accept this.

If the object of knowledge or desire, therefore, is not that projected by the senses and feelings, what is it? The thing that the sage would know, the object of his highest desire, is that the effects of individuality shall be suppressed (perception and impulse), and that this knowing subject may be merged with Brahman. The universalizing of this object of desire is accomplished when the sage through meditation conceives himself as one with Brahman. Therefore for the sage or sannyāsin to whom the fulness of life is meditation, his function has been maintained and his life filled with contentment and bliss. The self of sense is a by-product of this true self and therefore valueless by itself. The pursuit of sense and impulse is of no consequence. The immortality and gross neglect of social restrictions on the part of sages are a natural outcome of such a theory in its practical aspect. The theoretical fulfilment of this doctrine must be that the sense-world is illusion. For the warrior who desired to look upon his world and his service to it in an objective sense, not only the world which was his life was illusion, but his activity and desire were all hopeless. The ātman that the princes offered to Hindu thought was stripped of

all that meant life to them, and nothing but the shell of knowledge was left.

The Vedānta philosophy, which is the later systematized form of this idealism, uses this conception of Māyā (illusion) as its fundamental doctrine. All reality is in the subject; all else is illusion. Deussen's commentary states this idea thus:

> It was a simple consequence of these conceptions [multiplicity and oneness] when the Vedānta declared the empirical concept which represents to us a manifold existing outside the self, a world of the Object existing independently of the Subject, to be a glamour [māyā], an innate illusion resting on an illegitimate transference, in virtue of which we transfer the reality, which alone belongs to the subject, to the world of the object, and conversely, the characteristics of the objective world, e.g., corporeality, to the subject, the Self, the Soul.[1]

He continues with an analysis of Çankara's introduction as follows:

> Object and subject having as their province the presentation of the "Thou" and the "I," are of a nature as opposed as darkness and light. Hence it follows that the transfer of the object which has as its province the idea of the "Thou," and its qualities, to the pure spiritual subject, which has as its province the idea of the "I" conversely, that the transfer of the subject and its qualities to the object, is logically false. . . . . The object of knowledge, the Soul, thus remains, entirely unaltered, no matter whether we rightly understand it, or not. From this we must conclude that the ground of the erroneous empirical concept is to be sought for solely in the knowing subject.

The chief idea of this later system is the unreality of the report of the senses. This is one conclusion of the failure of the Brahmans to accept the content of the Self (that the Kshatriyans offered) as in any way a vehicle to salvation. The knowing self alone is real, and only those that can attain a right understanding of it through meditation reach salvation. This meant usually only the Brahmans. The rest of society was consigned to the miseries of transmigration. Thus we can say that not only were the objects that the self presented an illusion, but even religion and salvation itself became an illusion except for the favored Brahman.

This chapter must include an explanation of ātman in terms of the sacrifice as a mechanism. The watchword of ritualistic Brahmanism was "doing"; of philosophical Brahmanism, "knowing."

[1] Cf. Deussen, *The System of the Vedānta*, pp. 51–54.

The ritualist said, "Do the service of the sacrifice"; the philosopher said, "Know the Sacred Word." In spite of these differences the dialectic of the processes is the same. The method of the Upanishads was contemplation; through meditation the philosopher came to the realization that Brahman was Ātman. This was the means of salvation, just as partaking of the god on the altar was regeneration of the worshiper. Here also Ātman partook of Brahman; the philosopher made himself one with the god, he brought the god within him, and this realization was the means of deliverance from all evil and desire. However, this difference between Rig-Veda sacrifice and Brahmanical contemplation must be emphasized: the sacrifice was a means of fulfilling desire, it refilled the sacrifice, it gave hope and courage; contemplation delivered from desire and fulfilled only the great desire of oneness with the Brahman—all of which is the outcome of the staticity and completeness of the Brahman conception. It reflects quite completely the impersonal and static nature of the caste system whose product this type of thought most surely is.

Hindu thought is consistently pantheistic after the Rig-Veda period; pantheism has no place in it for a reconstruction. Everything is now and forever the same. Contemplation does not destroy its images; it exaggerates and expands its picture and weaves a mystic mood about its thought. Contemplation projects its picture out and away from it. It is reflection that is the iconoclast of our mental images. It gathers the concepts up within itself, tears them apart, and out of the ruins and ever-incoming experiences re-creates its ideas. But reflection is not the method of the Upanishads. Union of Ātman and Brahman is attained, but it is at the expense of Ātman which failed to realize itself within the Brahman.

The innovation failed; it resulted in a new form of subjectivity. In Ātman the Hindus had a new ideal. A hypothesis is subjective and ideal until it is realized in experience, when it becomes objective and real. No idea is essentially the one or the other; it becomes whatever it is according to its functions. Ātman was a new hypothesis of the world, but failed to find expression and fulfilment in Brahman. Though Ātman and Brahman are made identical, it

is a mechanical relation, and ātman never becomes a real working part of Brahman. The original ātman idea therefore remained a thing of the imagination, not of experience. The world which this ātman of the imagination represented became an illusion; the only thing that remained real was an ātman (self) that was realized through an empty meditation, whose method we may believe was largely hypnotic. This had no part in an active experience. In one form or another this struggle of a new hypothesis against a fixed habit plays the greatest rôle among the causes of subjectivity in Hindu thought.

CHAPTER V

LATER INNOVATIONS

A. BUDDHISM AND OTHER RELIGIOUS REVOLTS

In 1896 inscriptions were discovered in Northern India to the effect that King Açoka came to worship where Buddha had been born. This place was Kapilavastu. The inscriptions were important for several reasons: they established the fact that Buddha was a real person and was descended from a royal family; they also indicated that this movement arose in that part of the country where Aryan settlement was newest. Siddartha Gautama, alias Buddha, was born about 560 B.C.; the legend related that his father's desire was to keep from him all knowledge of sin and suffering, but that he was unsuccessful, and that Gautama in his twenty-ninth year left his royal home, his wife, and infant son to search for the solution of the problem of existence and thus to carry the way of salvation to others. After listening to Brahman sages, from whom he gained no comfort, he attempted to work out the solution himself, and the result of his inspiration under the bo tree was the foundation of the second innovation against ritualistic Brahmanism.

The Tipitaka, the literature of early Buddhism, was written in the Pali language, which was probably a dialect of Northern India. This dialect was taken to Ceylon during the reign of Açoka, where it suffered an arrested development. In Northern India the dialect became modified along with the change in Buddhism. This means that in Northern India the Buddhist texts are found only in a mixed dialect and the Sanskrit. Hence it is to Ceylon that we must look for the purest form of the teachings of Buddha. These writings consisted of dialogue, sermons, and philosophical treatises on the sermons; but the essence of the doctrine is found in the sermons. From the sermon of Benares it is necessary to conclude that Gautama himself absolutely discarded philosophy, asceticism, and ritual; his was a system of social ethics.

No reference is made to either a god or a soul in these early sermons—the way of salvation was the whole idea. The later writings were a conservative theological and philosophical treatment of the original Buddhism. Some of the Brahmans had accepted the teaching of Gautama, but, instead of being converted to the faith, they translated the faith according to their own needs and tendencies, and the result of this went into the manuscripts as a variety of doctrines and contradictions. One of the most noteworthy facts of Buddhism is its disappearance in India proper and its power and permanence in other countries, such as Burmah, Ceylon, and China.

There are three fundamental doctrines in Buddhism—Aniccam, Dukkan, and Anattam. These are, respectively, the impermanence of every individual, the sorrow inherent in individuality, and the unreality of any abiding principle. Gautama's sermon on the foundation of righteousness shows how he attempted to solve this:

> There are two extremes, O Recluses, which he who has gone forth ought not to follow: the habitual practice on the one hand, of those things whose attraction depends upon the pleasures of sense, and especially of sensuality (a practice low and pagan, fit only for the worldly-minded, unworthy, of no abiding profit); and the habitual practice, on the other hand, of self-mortification (a practice painful, unworthy, and equally of no abiding profit).
>
> There is a Middle Way, O Recluses, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathagata—a path which opens the eyes and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvāṇa.
>
> And what is the Middle Path? Verily it is the Noble Rightfold Path. That is to say:
>
> Right Views (free from superstition and delusion).
> Right Aspirations (high, and worthy of the intelligent worthy man).
> Right Speech (kindly, open and truthful).
> Right Conduct (peaceful, honest, pure).
> Right Livelihood (bringing hurt or danger to no living thing).
> Right Effort (in self-training and self-control).
> Right Mindfulness (the active and watchful mind).
> Right Rapture (in deep meditation on the realities of life).[1]

[1] Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 135.

This is typically a social code of right living. It is in strange contrast with his theory of the sorrow and error of individuality,

just as the impermanence of the individual contradicts the idea underlying transmigration. All this emphasizes the difficulty of the problem with which Gautama was wrestling and the futility of any attempt at solution. Gautama preached against castes, against the ineffectiveness of deeds or of the ritual service. Salvation must come through the individual; every man must save himself, for faith in the Buddha could not accomplish it, although Buddha could show him the way. This salvation was open to none who did not renounce the world and take upon him a life of self-denial. Gautama disclaims all definition of life or self; he takes a middle way which brings peace and happiness. The end of all is Nirvāṇa. This is described as Ambrosia, a going out, peace, happiness, the end of craving, the state of purity, the uncreate, the tranquil, the unchanging, the imperishable: "All on fire is this endless becoming, burning and blazing! Full of pain is it, of despair! If only one could reach a state in which there were no becoming, there would be calm, that would be sweet—the cessation of all these conditions, the getting rid of all these defects (of lusts, of evil and karma), the end of cravings, the absence of passion, peace, Nirvāṇa!"[1]

The ten fetters—ignorance, conformations, consciousness, name and form, the six senses, contact, sensation, grasping, becoming, and old age and death—were to be overcome before Nirvāṇa could be reached. This conquest might be accomplished during the lifetime as well as at death—a Buddhist ideal which is known as Arahatship. Those who could not accomplish this state before death went through a series of rebirths. According to your deeds in this life were you reborn either as animal or man. The inconsistency of such a theory they could not realize, and in this lies the pessimism of Buddhism. For the later Buddhist this may not constitute pessimism, but for the whole trend of thought such an interpretation is inevitable. The works of life have their effect; the individual must determine his own salvation. It is a dynamic power that lies in each person; this positive idea can find no place in the Buddhist social system, in spite of the evident yearning for such a conception. Indian social life could not foster such an

[1] See Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*.

idea; therefore the Buddhist argument runs: Every attempt at individual expression brings sorrow and pain in the end. Therefore renounce the things of life; they are its fetters; yield yourself to a method of suppression; destroy desire, destroy all feeling and ambition. The life of self-control and self-denial alone brings peace and relief from evil. Therefore also destroy all the springs of activity; reduce the self to its lowest denominator—this is salvation.

The self in which Buddha believed and which he wished to express was the active life of sense and feeling, but he, too, found no place for it. He believed that this life was real, that his sense-world was true. Yet there was no way of socializing his conception. He wandered for years as a student and teacher, hoping to find a solution. Finally, during his meditation under the bo tree he conceived a plan of curbing, controlling, and suppressing the senses and impulses until they disappeared in that unconsciousness that means peace and Nirvāṇa. His object of desire was no illusion, but on the other hand there was no place for it in Indian social life. Hence he must keep it within himself, where evidently it was to be lost in unconsciousness. This means annihilation of sense and impulse, which to him were the self. Buddha does not openly accept this.

The materialists, a small, secret philosophical school, frankly destroyed the soul with the body. They consequently destroyed also salvation and the idea of transmigration. This was the last step in the negative movement of Indian thought.

This is one kind of solution for the discomforts and pain of existence—the only one that can be projected into a static universality, such as pantheism. The world progresses through a conflict of individual impulses and activities; it also dies by the same means. When a higher synthesis rises out of the conflict, when the problem is solved through mutual reconstruction of conflicting forces, then society experiences progress. But when one side remains immovable, then the other can only turn its activity back upon itself. Such a result can be only a makeshift of solution, for no real progress thus arises. So with Buddhism; striking against immovable Brahmanism, the self of Buddhism turned back within itself

and sought to find its satisfaction in the destruction of its dynamic elements. Many contend that the doctrine of Buddha does not preach annihilation of the soul; the texts themselves indicate that Gautama left this point undiscussed; but the word Nirvāṇa in its origin meant "a going out," and the natural result of this doctrine would be annihilation. If the soul is not annihilated, it is at least put in a state where it can do no harm; it is ineffective and negative; it does not assert, but inhibits, its impulses; it does not grow, it shrivels. The doctrine preaches good deeds only by the way; its goal is cessation of activities. Nirvāṇa then is the zero of self-expression. This is the logical conclusion of the long struggle between pantheism and the efforts for reconstruction. This struggle was at every point guarded and aided by the Brahman caste feeling. In Buddhism, therefore, the ātman may still be equivalent to brahman, but both have lost their value. The God or Brahman became zero and fails to appear in Buddhist teaching. On the other hand, the segregated ātman, though not technically destroyed, becomes zero through the plan of renunciation and self-denial. Even in the Brahmanized form in later Buddhism, when the gods are mentioned they have lost their power. Just as the god-conception developed with the inspiration and expansion of the individual (Rig-Veda sacrifice) and were in that sense identical, so here the limitation of individual growth, the suppression of personal inspiration, means the eventual destruction of the individual soul and also the god.

The doctrine of transmigration first appeared in Brahmanism, but received greater emphasis in Buddhism. It is a type of doctrine that could live with a pantheistic theory. Each is founded upon a pervading, underlying principle that is permanent. In the pantheistic system this principle is the basis for all the differentiated forms of the universe, and in the human soul has its permanent soul amid all the frailties of human activities. Whether the transmigration idea was taken over from the Dravidians, or was already existent in popular phases of religion, or arose directly out of this era, is of small importance. Pantheism would foster it in any case. Any closely knit system such as totemism or pantheism is congenial to this idea. But while Brahmanism attempted

to give the goal of transmigration a positive statement, Buddhism succeeded only in reaching a negative position.

The fall of Buddhism was inevitable. In the first place, it struck at the social system, for any caste-man could be a Buddhist. For a time this threatened the power of the castes, but the social system was too dead to be resurrected. In the second place, focusing of thought upon the self brings greater consciousness of its impulses and habits, and the end is quite as likely to be a reinforcement of these as an inhibition of them. Such has been the history of monastic orders. Hence Buddhism was destined either to be reconceived or to die. Thus Buddhism passed from India, though it lived in other countries where it had been adopted.

Another heretical religion appearing at this time was Jainism. In many of its tenets it was akin to Buddhism, but it did not deny the reality of the soul or of matter; it practiced asceticism and worshiped animals. Its power was very much less than that of Buddhism, and it has continued as a small sect in India even to the present day. This religion was instituted likewise by a member of the royal caste, one Mahāvīra, who was a contemporary of Gautama. Jainism and Buddhism were only two of many heretical sects that sprang up about this time. These heretical tendencies came from the eastern and northern parts of India, where life was newer and less conservative. If philosophical Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Jainism can be accepted as any indication, it is possible to say that reconstructive and heretical tendencies came from the Kshatriyan class. This era was ripe for revolt against the deadening doctrine of the Brahmans. But none of the heresies employed a method of attack that could compete with the prestige and inertia of Brahman ideals and activities. Brahman life needed to be sensitized, and this had never been accomplished. Just as in the first innovation, these impulses toward individuality and independence expressed in Buddhism and Jainism were associated with a movement toward political centralization. This culminated in the early Gupta dynasties, leaders of which were Chandragupta (316 B.C.) and his grandson Açoka. The latter was styled the Constantine of Buddhism because he made it the state religion. This was also a period of comparative prosperity in Indian history.

The contradictions and changes of Buddhism show that the original idea was smoothed over and polished into a comfortable doctrine by Brahman converts, who could not wrestle free from the spirit of their caste. Its negative aspects were softened and its pessimism relieved to the extent that its followers took up the faith unconscious of the bitter struggle that had brought it about and of the irony of their attitude toward its tenets. On the other hand, the secret doctrine of the materialists gained no power or place in the system. The failure of this second great period of revolt further argues that Brahmanism was an arrested development.

CHAPTER VI

ORTHODOX DEVELOPMENTS

Coincident with the heretical movements an orthodox development was taking place. This tendency is recorded chiefly in the *Mahābhārata*, which was probably under construction before Buddhism, and the *Bhagavadgītā*. The *Mahābhārata* was well known to Pāṇini in the fourth century B.C., though it was not completed until the period of the renaissance, about 600 A.D. This poem is the scriptures for all sects of early Hinduism. The great god is Brahman, the All-God, but its pantheon (for it has a pantheon) has changed much from that of the Rig-Veda. No god has any great power, but the change that occurs in the list of gods indicates that Brahmanism is undergoing an unconscious change. Two of the new gods are Dharma (duty) and Kāma (desire); Indra has lost much of his pomp, though still the warrior's defender; Varuna too has faded, and Soma is almost forgotten. Have the Aryans lost their inspiration? The sectarian religions affect strongly the old objects of worship; the sacrifice has lost much of its god-compelling aspect. Dharma and Kāma undoubtedly express facts that were much closer than the ideas associated with the old gods.

But many other factors enter into this early Hinduism: asceticism was greatly emphasized; the yogi became a juggler and charlatan; his acts were looked upon with awe. Alongside this asceticism the grossest immorality flourished. "There were doubtless good and bad priests, but the peculiarity of the epic priest, rapacious and lustful, is that he glories in his sins."[1] The sects favored "heavens," and each god had his own; this idea existed at the same time with transmigration and the pantheistic doctrine. The epic covered many ancient rites and superstitions, fetishism included. Idolatry and tree worship were initiated. Great devotion to the law existed at the same time with the most out-and-out disregard of it. This new religion that was superseding and absorbing Brahmanism was multiform; it was one great jungle;

[1] Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 353.

it absorbed everything. This Vaiṣṇavism was a religious reform, like Buddhism and Jainism. It covered many centuries and appeared under many forms. Bhandarkar says:

> Its early name was Ekantika Dharma, or the religion of a single-minded love, and devotion to One. In its background stood the *Bhagavadgītā*, a discourse professing to be preached by Vāsudeva-Krishna. It soon assumed a sectarian form and was called the Pāncarātra or Bhagavāta religion. It was professed by a tribe of Kshatriyans of the name of Savata and was noticed by Megasthenes about the end of the fourth century before Christ as the religion of such a specific people.[1]

Another form under which this worship appeared was the Nārāyaṇa faith; it here identified Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa. The *Bhagavadgītā* contributes the conception of bhakti, a fervent, passionate attachment—a conception which puts an entirely new personal element into Hindu religious expression. This conception may have been a Christian contribution, but it is impossible to determine this.[2] After the Christian era Vaiṣṇavism became related to the Krishna worship, a religious system of the cowherds, the Abhiras, a foreign tribe. It continued until the eighth century A.D., when, after a struggle with the monism and world-illusion theory of Samkaracarya, Ramanuja revived the bhakti religion. Another line of religious development appeared in the Rudra-Çiva worship. During the renaissance period the popular worship was expressed in the trinity, Viṣhnu, Çiva, and Brahman. These gods are no longer nature-gods but quite anthropomorphic. This early Hinduism was so assimilative that it accepted everything that the people favored. It brought no opposition; it simply accepted all ideas without distinctions. Brahmanism, while quite like this, always remolds these ideas to suit its pantheism.

> It was because this Ekantika religion was so conservative that it gradually made its way into Hindu society in general, though it did not succeed in uprooting the religion of sacrifice. Still it always retained its character as a religion for women and for all castes, Sūdras included, and in its later development it was associated with such Vedic rites as then remained when it was professed by the Brahmans, but not so associated when its followers were of lower castes, among whom it continued to exercise great influence.[3]

[1] Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Çaivism, and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 87.

[2] Macnicol, *Indian Theism*, p. 272.

[3] Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Çaivism, and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 30.

It is supposed that the *Mahābhārata* was originally the work of a low-caste man, and Garbe contends that the bhakti idea also was introduced by a Kshatriyan, Krishna. But as usual the materials were remodeled by the Brahmans. These injections into the orthodox system indicate how intense was the need for some kind of expression of concrete life. The development of such ideas as bhakti and the personality found in the trinity shows that they were capable of conceptions that, if permitted free rein, might have developed into as fine ideas as those of Western religions. But these ideas were continually bound by the old caste restrictions and formulations. These ideas were constructive, but their life was warped. In the heretical religions the conceptions were largely destructive and grew rapidly.

These orthodox remodelings expressed a very meager, often primitive, unsatisfactory, yet objective outlet of self-consciousness. It was an effort to get everyday thought and feeling into their ideal values—an effort to give to concrete living reality and power. Self-consciousness in Indian thought since Brahmanism was almost completely subjective, but the popular elements insisted upon some place in the system. The Kshatriyan attempted to function in contradiction to the priests and failed. These positive results of Hinduism were accomplished because these innovators succeeded in getting their ideas unostentatiously before the Brahman. This movement was gradual and probably unconscious.

During the renaissance (about 400–1000 A.D.) this objective expression of self-consciousness was carried farther in the process by the building up of physical objects through the Indian efforts at science and expression of social phenomena through the literature. Again it was the Brahman that was principally the medium of expression. Now the Kshatriyan had learned to further his own interests by means of the Brahman; royalty remained in the background as patron and supporter. This rejuvenation occurred just after the political centralization of the Gupta dynasty of the early fourth century A.D.

How much foreign invasion directed this rebirth it is impossible to say. But the princes seemed at last to have learned their lesson; in order to realize their ideals and desires they must needs work

through the priest rather than against him. Hence, here are the beginnings of optimistic, objective self-expression found in a promising science and in understanding of personality, meager as it is, as illustrated in the trinity.

What might have been the conclusion of this positive movement under favoring political conditions it is impossible to say. But already the Scythians were pouring in from the northwest, and about 1000 A.D. the Mohammedans invaded the country. From that time forward India was the scene of both foreign and native struggle. Hinduism is very much what it was during the renaissance, and Brahmanism still holds a powerful place. Its stamp of subjectivity and pessimism remain even today the essential fact of all Indian thought.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY

Let us retrace the line of development of subjectivity. The first period is thoroughly objective—a difference which fixes more sharply the problem of the causes of the rise of subjectivity. The Aryans were in migration and at war with the native Dravidians. They had lived in close clan organization, but added freedom and initiative came with this looser type of life. An appreciation of the objective world is illustrated by their nature-gods and the first tendency toward personality in these gods. However, the group spirit was stronger than any individual force. The warrior was supreme; Indra, the war-god, was leader of the pantheon. Religion was a part of the warrior's daily routine, and certain men served especially in this capacity of priest and became quite expert. Every phase of society had its particular function exercised freely.

The priest grew in power through the specialization of his function. Nomadic life was as responsible for this as for the emphasis on the function of the warrior. After the Aryans began to colonize the eastern part of India along the Ganges, the tribes united and settled down to a life of comfort. Here the warrior lost much of function, while the office of the priest was quite as valuable as before. He became supreme in this period and unconsciously assisted in the formation of the caste system. He emphasized his own occupation and he emphasized himself as "twice-born," which set him off in the first place from every other function of the group, and in the second place from the conquered "once-born" Dravidian or serf. The inertia induced by this warm, fruitful climate assisted in this swamping of individual interest and power. The priest expressed his particular function through the sacrifice which was the vehicle for some telling transformations in this period. The company of gods gradually changed to an All-God and a pantheistic view of the universe; the brahman developed from an objective lifting up of the accessories of the sacrifice to the great god which was offered in the same way. The first and

second tendencies merged in the final idea of Brahman. At the same time the vehicle was being improved and elaborated so that it too became an object of worship; then the sacrifice lost its real function in society. The sacrificer was raised to self-consciousness when he could set himself over against the god of the sacrifice. When he partook of the god he gained a new self—he gained more of the vital element. No such new object of knowledge or desire can be obtained without its attempting to express itself. In the case of the sacrifice this became the reconceived god. For the Rig-Veda period this god pleased the senses and the feeling; he appeared in Nature, which was real and live; he gave the joy of dawn, the contentment of the evening, and the peace or fear of the night. These gods were known to all the senses of man.

But in the new land there appeared a "Pharaoh who knew not Joseph." In the permanent settlement of Western India the warrior lost his function; he was the nominal ruler still. But the priest did not need protection now, the land and homes did not need to be fought for, and the service of the warrior became an abstraction to him. Consequently when the princes proposed the ātman idea, which to them was filled with the joy of sense and the satisfaction of activity, which to them was real and vital, the Brahmans took it over and made an abstraction of it. The knowing subject was no longer a thing that saw, heard, warred, and ruled, but merely a vehicle of erudition, which vehicle could really not be known. Just so the later sacrifice became merely a mechanism for carrying out elaborate and fixed formulae. Brahman the god, which is identified with self, is quite abstract, universal, and unchanging. This abstract self of the Brahman priest was capable of receiving any amount or sort of knowledge; the capacity of the vedic student was all-absorbing; the usual brahmacārin was little more than a mirror of vedic tradition. He did not add to the store. Even so the All-God Brahman was everything that was or ever could be. This god could absorb everything, but could create nothing. However, it is not to be supposed that the Brahman priest arrived at this way of thinking from his use of the Kshatriyan attitude. For centuries he had been learning the Veda and performing the sacrifice; undoubtedly these priests

early came to a class-consciousness. Later the seers in the meditations of their old age arrived at the idea that knowledge of sacrificial rites was alone sufficient. Just as the sacrifice was sacred and worshiped, so this knowledge came to be sacred. This knowledge was universal among the priesthood, and hence can never be really described as subjective. But what is this self that can know the knowledge; what was originally there that could know? This vehicle of knowledge was the real soul, but it could never be known; it had to be individual. But this soul that alone did not pass away was the only reality—this was Brahman. A later philosophical statement makes this the only Brahman. The Brahman is all in each individual.

Out of such a system there can be but two results. One of these is found in the orthodox Vedānta, the other in the Sāṅkhyan system, or in Buddhism. In the Vedānta the self is made up of this inner soul which cannot be known, and of the attachment of this soul through ignorance to the senses and the will. These latter are not real, and all pass away when the true soul is freed from them. Hence they are not a part of the soul, and it is a misfortune that they ever became attached to it. If the activities of sense and will are not real, then the objective world which they give us cannot be real. So it is that the phenomenal world "in which we live and move and have our being" is illusion; the only reality is within us—and that is unknown.

Buddhism goes a step farther and denies, not only the value of consciousness, but the reality of god. Buddha accepts the reality of the senses and activities of the self—he advises right aspiration, right views, control of the senses—for this brings peace and contentment in this life. But all is futile—for these all pass away, and the unconscious self alone is left. Whether Buddha reaches annihilation is a matter of question, but the materialists at any rate take this final step and deny any life hereafter, any reality of mind apart from matter, and therefore deny transmigration. There is one life of this world and that is real. The Vedāntists and Buddhists, finding no means of reconciling their object of knowledge which the aroused self presents, turn it back upon itself, and each destroys the individual activity of that self. It is only the unknown

and universal self which is real. For the Brahman his function was secure because he was at the head of the fixed social caste system. Nevertheless his function had become dead—a mere habit pressed by social custom; his function was therefore abstract also. The sacrifice no longer created a new heaven and a new earth, or a renewed sacrificer and a new god—it was an arrested development. The Buddhists refused to offer up this empty dish, and they died from want of spiritual food. They could find no satisfaction, no life, hence their pessimism and negation of life. When god and the intimate facts of sense, feeling, and will are taken away, the leaven of all religious experience is gone. On the one hand, this means an overemphasis of facts of sense because it cannot matter to society; on the other hand, it kills the senses because they can find no value in society. The individual feeling and will simply have no place in society at all.

While the Vedāntists and Buddhists have given us great systems of thought, they have not been valuable in relieving society in general. Hence the orthodox movements of the epics and the semiorthodox period of the renaissance have gained where the others failed. New ideas were slipped into the old system until it was unwittingly remade, and hardened Brahmanism became more or less pliant Hinduism. None of these ideas either alone or together can compare with the earlier innovations which were more in the nature of revolts against Brahmanism. This internal attack was able finally to accomplish more satisfactory steps through the bhakti idea and the personal tendencies of the trinity of later Hinduism. Here just as elsewhere the priests reclothed every doctrine with a bit of pantheism, but in the long run it was an advance. The renaissance showed how the Kshatriyan had given up the struggle for religious independence and had tactfully permitted himself to function through the priest. So it is that advance in literature, science, and great systematization of knowledge came about. The Hindu was again developing a self-consciousness through a building up of a physical object. But this activity did not last long. It is impossible to say what might have been the situation if the political life of India had been different.

Every great wave in Hindu thought has been coincident with a freer political life and with a centralization of government. The union of native tribes occurred at approximately the same time as the development of the Upanishad theory. The *Mahābhārata* indicated that that was not a confederation, but a struggle that ended in the supremacy of one tribe. Buddhism and other heretical tendencies can be associated with the great Maurya dynasties of the third and fourth centuries B.C., while the rise of the more enlightened phases of Hinduism and the renaissance is associated with the great Gupta powers of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. Such emphasis on political life gives the warrior opportunity to exercise his original function and thus to gain a new view of his value to society. Added to this line of coincidences is the contention by many Sanskrit scholars that the innovations in thought came from princes; they cite the court of Janaka described in the Upanishads, the family of Siddartha Gautama which was of royal blood, though not direct rulers, and they maintain also that Krishna (in the Bhagavadgītā) was from a royal house. To this we can add the patronage that the kings gave the Brahmans in the development of science and literature. In almost every case these princes came from the eastern portion of India, where the tribes were yet in a mobile state and life was more active.

These efforts at self-expression, then, came from a class and a portion of the country which was still free. Its purpose was thwarted through its meeting the all-absorbing capacity of Brahmanism, which abstracted all of the real, vital power of its conception. In such manner had the warrior's function also been abstracted and rendered valueless in the general social life. Beating against an immovable barrier, this self turned within to find in its own capacity for being all that was real and eternal. Hence Indian thought must always be subjective as long as the caste system and its counterpart, an unknowable pantheism, can control its social life.

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